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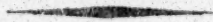
ORLANDO FURIOSO:

TRANSLATED

FROM THE ITALIAN

OF

LUDOVICO ARIOSTO.



VOL. III.



Frontispiece to Vol. 3.

Book 23



Angelica Kauffman Del.

Arthur Smith Sculp.

Published by Vernor & Hood Dec. 1. 1798.

ORLANDO FURIOSO:

TRANSLATED

FROM THE ITALIAN

OF

LUDOVICO ARIOSTO;

WITH

NOTES:

BY JOHN HOOLE.



IN FIVE VOLUMES.



A NEW EDITION.

VOL. III.



LONDON:

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AND VERNOR AND HOOD.

1799.



THE
TWENTIETH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

VOL. III.

B

THE ARGUMENT.

THE champion of the Amazons discovers himself to be Guido of the house of Clarmont, and gives an account of the history and first establishment of the Amazon Government. The warriors consult together on the means of quitting the country. Marphisa would persuade them to effect it by force of arms. Guido takes the management upon himself; and next morning they attempt to break through the whole body of the Amazons, but are nearly overpowered by numbers, when Astolpho, blowing his horn, drives all the Amazons before him. Sanfonetto, Guido, Gryphon, Aquilant, and Marphisa, being terrified with the rest, precipitately hasten on board the ship prepared for them, and leave Astolpho behind them. The knights and Marphisa afterwards landing, Marphisa parts from the others. Her encounter with Gabrino, Pinabello, and lastly with Zerbino.

THE
 TWENTIETH BOOK
 OF
 ORLANDO FURIOSO.

IN fields of battle and the Muses' lore,
 What wonders have been wrought by dames of yore,
 Whose skill in arms and letters spreads their praise
 Throughout the world to their far-distant days!
 Camilla and Harpalice, renown'd 5
 In hardy camps, with wreaths unfading crown'd,
 And

Ver. 1. *In fields of battle, &c.*] This introduction seems to have been copied and enlarged by Spenser in his *Fairy Queen*.

Where is the antique glory now become,
 That whilom wont in women to appear?
 Where be the brave achievements done by some?
 Where be the battles, where the shield and spear, &c.?

BOOK III. C. iv. St. 1.

Ver. 5. *Camilla and Harpalice,*] Camilla, queen of the Volscians, a female warrior, who came to the assistance of Turnus,
 and

And Sappho and Corinna, held so high
 For Learning's sacred gifts shall never die.
 Oppos'd to man, behold the beauteous race,
 In every science, our renown efface ; 10
 And each, who turns the leaf of story past,
 Shall undiminish'd see their honours last.
 Though such examples seem of late to fail,
 Not always evil influence shall prevail,

and was treacherously slain by Aruns. See VIRGIL'S *Æn.* vii. xi. Harpalice was a warlike virgin of Thrace, who, when the Getæ, a people of Scythia, had made her father prisoner, collected together a body of troops with great celerity, suddenly attacked the enemy, cut a great number to pieces, and set her father at liberty.

Ver. 7. — *Sappho and Corinna*,—] Sappho, a well-known poetess, born at Lesbos. See her Epistle to Phaon, in OVID. There were three of the name of Corinna, all skilled in letters. One was of Thebes, one of Theſpis, and the third of Corinth. The last lived at the time, and is supposed to have been the favourite, of Ovid; but the most famous was she who, in a trial of poetry, conquered the great poet Pindar. Her glory seems to have been fully established by the public memorial of her picture exhibited in her native city, and adorned with a symbol of her victory. Pausanias, who saw it, supposes her to have been one of the handsomest women of her age. Time has left us only a few scraps of Corinna's poetry.

When

When those, whose writings should their worth reveal,
Through ignorance or envy oft conceal: 16

Yet in our times, I see with joyful eyes
Such countless virtues in the sex arise,
As well may claim the pen and faithful page
To hand them down to every future age. 20

Then slanderers' tongues no more with canker'd speech
Shall taint those glories which they cannot reach;
But to such height shall soar the female name,
As even to leave behind Marphisa's fame.

To her we now return—The dame address'd 25
The courteous knight, and answer'd his request.
Eager to know the youth, she soon reveal'd
In few, her dreadful name, till then conceal'd:
Marphisa am I call'd!—no more she said,
For fame through every realm the rest had spread. 30
The stranger then—All here, I trust may know
The glorious stock to which my birth I owe!
Not only France, and Spain, each neighbouring land,
But Æthiop, Ind, and Pontus' frozen strand,
Have heard of Clarmont's far-resounding name, 35
Whence the bold knight* who flew Almontes' came;

* ORLANDO.

And he*, by whom the fierce Mambrino slain,
 (His kingdom laid in ruin) prefs'd the plain.
 That blood I boast—and near the Euxine waves,
 Where Iſther with his ſtreams the region laves, 40
 To Amon's duke (who on that fated ſhore
 His wanderings ended), me Conſtantia bore.
 One year has roll'd, ſince her, in ſorrow loſt,
 I left to ſeek my friends on Gallia's coaſt:
 But, midſt the voyage, roſe a ſtormy wind, 45
 And hither drove me from the port deſign'd.
 Ten months have paſt, ſince here detain'd, I mourn
 The lingering hours, and curſe each day's return.
 Guido the Savage, am I call'd—a name
 Scarce yet recorded on the liſt of fame. 50
 Here,

* RINALDO.

Ver. 49. *Guido the Savage*,—] This character appears to have been introduced by Arioſto, as no ſuch name occurs in Boyardo. Spenſer has a knight with the appellation of “Savage knight,” which ſeems given him not from any reproach, but merely to expreſs a diſpoſition inured to hardy feats, and ſtranger to the ſoftneſs of a court.

It was a goodly ſwain, and of great might,
 But in vain ſhews, that wont young knights bewitch,
 And courtly ſervices took no delight.

- - - - -

It was, to weet, the good Sir Satyrane,
 That rang'd abroad, to ſeek adventures wild,

As

Here, with his ten compeers, in list'd field,
I Angelon of Melibæa kill'd.

Next the soft conflict with the dames I try'd,
And now ten wedded partners grace my side,
Whom, fairest, gentlest of the female band 55
I chose, and rule with uncontroll'd command.
Thus shall he fare, whom, on the fated day,
Prevailing Fortune gives the ten to slay.

The warriors question'd Guido, whence so few
The males appear'd, and why the female crew 60
Each husband to their sovereign will compell'd,
When males in other lands dominion held?
Then Guido answer'd——Often while detain'd }
I here have liv'd, I heard the cause explain'd, }
And what I heard, shall tell, since you demand. 65 }

As was his wont, in forest and in plain.
He was all arm'd in rugged steel, unfil'd,
As in the smoky forge it was compil'd,
And in his scutcheon bore a satyr's head.

FAIRY QUEEN, B. III. C. vii. St. 29.

Again, in another place.

—— On his shield was writ,
“ Selvagge fans finesse,” shewing secret wit.

This explanation may serve for Ariosto, who has assigned no reason
for giving this name to Guido.

Now twice ten years elaps'd, the Grecian bands
From Troy return'd to view their native lands
(Ten years the siege endur'd, as many tost
On adverse seas, they rov'd from coast to coast)
Arriv'd, they found their wives, who vainly try'd 70
To bear such absence, had their place supply'd
With young gallants, whom to their love they led,
No more to freeze in a forsaken bed.
The Grecians finding with another's breed
Their dwellings fill'd, by joint consent agreed 75
To' excuse th' offence; for each well knew his wife
Could ne'er so long forget the nuptial life:
But the sad children, born of lawless love,
Must exil'd thence a vagrant fortune prove:
Nor would the husbands so entail disgrace, 80
To nourish, at their cost, a spurious race.
Some were expos'd, and some with better fate
Their mothers kept conceal'd to man's estate.
Some, from their native seats, in various bands,
As chance directed, rov'd to foreign lands. 85
Some arms pursu'd; some chose the students toil;
Some follow'd arts; some plough'd the rustic foil:
These liv'd in courts; those serv'd the herds to rear;
As best it seem'd to her* who governs here.

* FORTUNE.

Departing with the rest, a youth was seen, 90
Of Clytemnestra born, the cruel queen;
His age eighteen, and fresh in bloom, as shows
The lily fair, or newly gather'd rose.
He, in a ship, with all provision stor'd,
For wealth and prey each creek and coast explor'd. 95
A hundred like himself compos'd his band,
With care selected from the Grecian land.
The Cretans, that Idomeneus expell'd,
The wretched fire, who Crete's dominion held,
And next, collecting arms and troops, prepar'd 100
Their new establish'd state from foes to guard,
Engag'd Phalantus (so the youth was nam'd)
With ample stipends, as his merits claim'd,
To serve their foldier, while his comrades all
With him they join'd to guard Dictamnus's wall. 105
A hundred cities grac'd the Cretan lands,
But chief above the rest Dictamnus stands,

Ver. 99. *The wretched fire—*] Idomeneus, king of Crete, having vowed, in case he returned in safety from the siege of Troy, to offer up the first object that presented itself, was met by his own son, whom, to keep his vow, he caused to be sacrificed. His subjects, struck with the barbarity of the action, banished him from his kingdom. See the whole story at full in Telemachus, Book ii.

Wealthy

Wealthy and fair, renown'd for amorous dames
Of lovely form, for pleasures, sports, and games.

The dames, accustom'd kindly to receive 110
Each foreign guest, to these such welcome give,
That little wanted to the Grecian train
O'er every house to hold their boundless reign.
Vigorous as fair, the youths their ardour prove
In blending raptures, as in kindling love. 115
To win the fair a few short days suffic'd,
Till these o'er every joy their lovers priz'd.

Now peace restor'd, Phalantus was releas'd
From warlike cares, the soldier's labour ceas'd,
And every hope of future stipends o'er, 120
The youths decreed to quit the Cretan shore.
The mourning females tears incessant shed,
As if they view'd their dearest parents dead:
Full oft apart they urg'd them to remain;
But when they found each fond entreaty vain, 125
Resolv'd with them their voyage to partake,
Their brothers, fires, and children they forsake,
While from her home each bears, by wary stealth,
Rich gems of price, and countless fums of wealth;
And with such secret care her dwelling leaves, 130
That not a man of Crete their flight perceives.

So

So prosperous was the hour, so swift the wind.
So well Phalantus had their course design'd,
That many a league his vessel plough'd the tide,
Ere those of Crete their heavy loss descry'd. 135
At length this fated strand, then scarcely prest
By foot of mortals, gave the wanderers rest.
Securely here they stay'd, and here awhile
At leisure weigh'd the profits of their guile.
Ten days to them this region seem'd a feat 140
Of amorous pleasures, and a blest retreat:
But, as it oft befalls, the fullest joy,
In youthful bosoms, sooner tends to cloy.
All now agreed to free them from the charge
Of female mates, and live again at large.
For fickle man ill brooks the heavy lot,
To keep the woman when the love's forgot!
Eager of rapine, ready to contend
For ravag'd wealth, but little prone to spend,
They saw a troop, so numerous and so fair, 150
Requir'd far other than a soldier's care.
For this, their wretched partners they forsook,
And loaded with their spoils, their course they took
To where, in Puglia, near the sea-beat shores,
They founded fair Tarentum's future towers. 155
The

The dames, abandon'd on a desert coast,
 Betray'd by those in whom they trusted most,
 Along the sands some days in silent grief
 Like statues stood ; but finding no relief
 From plaints or tears, they turn'd them to debate, 160
 What means might best relieve their hapless state :
 When, what her thoughts suggested, each disclos'd :
 Some to regain their native Crete propos'd,
 And rather dare the worst they might engage
 From a wrong'd husband or a father's rage, 165
 Than hid in deserts, or in forests lie,
 With want to linger, or with famine die.
 Some said, they never to such shame would bend,
 But rather, plung'd in seas, their being end ;
 And urg'd it better far, with honour lost, 170
 Though poor, or slaves, to rove from coast to coast,
 Than willing victims, to their native clime
 Returning, meet the sentence of their crime.

Such wretched thoughts, and still more wretched,
 rose

In every breast, from sense of present woes. 175
 At length a female, Oronthea nam'd,
 Stood forth, who kindred from king Minos claim'd :

The

The youngest, fairest of the beauteous band,
Less guilty she, of all who left the land,
To brave Phalantus had her virgin charms 180
Resign'd, and fled for him her parent's arms.

Now while her speech and outward looks express'd
The indignation of a generous breast,
She first condemn'd what each had singly mov'd,
Then urg'd that counsel which the rest approv'd. 185

She will'd them there to dwell, for there they found
A wholesome air, and fields with plenty crown'd;
Clear silver streams, that through the country stray'd,
Rich spreading meads, and forests thick with shade;
Fair ports and bays, that from the stormy wave 190
To wandering seamen ready shelter gave;
That now from Afric, now from Egypt brought
Their barks, with every store and treasure fraught.
She urg'd them there to' abide, and for the sake
Of those who wrong'd them, heavy vengeance take 195
On all the sex; and every vessel tost
By tempests, driven to shelter on the coast,
Pillage and burn, assail with fire and steel,
Nor let a single life their mercy feel.

Thus counsell'd she—till all alike inflam'd 200
With cruel thoughts, the new-made law proclaim'd.

Their safety found, what numbers lost their life ; 225

All found unequal to the arduous strife.

The ten, in trial well approv'd, they take,

And partners of their bed and kingdom make ;

But swear them first, that every wanderer led,

Of every rank, those hapless shores to tread, 230

Without distinction by their swords shall fall,

And one remorseless slaughter swallow all.

The dames, now pregnant grown, began with
fear

To view the day of their delivery near,

Left in succeeding time the numbers born 235

Of issue male, should hold their law in scorn ;

And they, at length, behold in evil hour

To hated man revert their darling power.

For this they fought such danger to repel,

Ere years had taught their children to rebel 240

And threat their freedom ; hence a law decreed

The mother's care one only male should breed.

Their new-born sons from shore to shore they sent,

With charge to those who thus commission'd went,

To' exchange the boys for girls in distant lands, 245

Or not, at least, return with empty hands.

Nor had the dames in mere compaffion spar'd
 A fingle man, fave but their herds to guard,
 And keep alive their name ; and thus was fhown
 Their law's ftern mercy to themfelves alone! 250
 All others felt its rage, one only grace
 The ftrangers found, that when they reach'd the
 place
 They fell not all at once beneath this cruel race. }
 If ten, if twenty, or if more arriv'd,
 In chains they lay, of liberty depriv'd ; 255
 Whence every day was drawn, by fate decreed,
 A wretch devoted in the fane to bleed ;
 Where, in the midft, by Oronthea rear'd,
 A dreadful altar to Revenge appear'd,
 While nam'd by lot, one held the ready knife, 260
 To fhed, in facrifice, his comrade's life.

Long years had paff, when to th' inhuman fhore
 A noble youth his lucklefs fortune bore ;
 From great Alcides' flock his birth he claim'd,
 In arms experienc'd, and Elbanio nam'd. 265
 Him, carelefs of a foe, and unprepar'd,
 At once they feiz'd, and with a numerous guard,
 With all his crew, detain'd in cruel thrall,
 Sad victims destin'd by their laws to fall.

Fair

Fair was the youth, of semblance rarely seen, 270
Of graceful carriage and commanding mien;
So from his lips the honey'd accents broke,
That venom'd asps might listen while he spoke.
From fame the news of his arrival caught,
To Alexandra's gentle ear was brought; 275
Fair Alexandra born of her who sway'd
The sceptre still, though now with years decay'd:
Still Oronthea liv'd, but none surviv'd,
Save her alone, of all that first arriv'd;
While as their years increas'd the female crew 280
Increas'd in strength, and in dominion grew.

Ten knights, renown'd for deeds of arms atchiev'd,
With hostile welcome, all that came, receiv'd.
Now Alexandra, eager to behold
A youth whose praise report so loudly told, 285
To Oronthea her request preferr'd,
And saw Elbanio, and his converse heard.
But when she sought to go, her virgin heart
Felt the first throbbing of an amorous smart.
In vain she struggled: she at length remain'd 290
A helpless prisoner by her captive chain'd.
Elbanio then——O fairest of thy kind!
If pity here could e'er reception find,

Pity, which dwells where'er the sun display'd,
 Gives tints to objects, and gives light to shade, 295
 Fain would I now (by those transcendent charms
 Whose powerful influence every gazer warms)
 From thee request my life, that what I owe
 To thee prolong'd, for thee I might bestow:
 But if dire fury here the virgin steels 300
 To each soft passion human nature feels,
 I ask not life—such hopes I know are vain,
 But let me yet a warrior's right obtain.
 Whate'er my fate—O! give me but to wield
 My glorious arms, and die with spear and shield! 305
 Not like some criminal whom laws arraign,
 Or brutal beast before the altar slain.

Fair Alexandra, in whose lovely eyes
 Compassion pleaded for the youth, replies.

Though savage is our land, more cruel known 310
 Than every realm, yet think not I shall own
 Each woman a Medea—were the mind
 Of all our females in destruction join'd,
 Yet I alone would rise above my kind:
 Or if, like many a soul with fury steel'd, 315
 I seem'd till now unknowing how to yield,

Till



Till thy arrival here, perchance there came
No stranger that might equal favour claim.
But sure, some tigress has my soul inflam'd,
And more than adamant my bosom fram'd; 320
If when I view thy valour, form, and age,
Compassion chace not all vindictive rage.
O! would to Heaven I might as well arrest
Th' inhuman law that binds each wretched guest,
As freely now my death I would receive, 325
And, with my own, thy better life reprieve!
But here no rank avails to break thy chain,
And what thou ask'st, though little, hard to gain:
Yet all I can—expect—while much I dread
New sufferings hang o'er thy devoted head! 330

Let me but meet (Elbanio thus rejoin'd)
The ten in arms—so firm my heart I find,
I trust t' escape with life the bloody fray,
And every foe, though trebly arm'd, to slay.

To this the virgin-fair made no reply, 335
But from her bosom drew a tender sigh.
She went, and parting, in her heart she found
A thousand shafts, and each a cureless wound;
Then fought her mother, and with earnest prayer
Inclin'd the queen the noble youth to spare; 340

On this condition, that in lifted fight
The ten should perish by his single might.

Queen Oronthea then the female train
To council call'd, and thus her speech began.

From every crew whom chance may hither send,
We still should place the bravest to defend 346

Our port and shores: by trial must we chuse,
What fits our wants to take, and what refuse,
Left, to our wrong, the coward soul should rise
To reign amongst us, while the valiant dies. 350

If with my judgment, you, O friends! agree,
Let us henceforth a sovereign law decree,
That every knight, by fortune hither led,
Ere in the dreadful fane his blood we shed,
Shall (in such compact if he dares engage) 355

At once with ten the combat singly wage;
And should he conquer all, he, with a train
Of chosen others, shall our guard maintain.
Thus far I speak, since in our prison lies
A captive, who to battle ten defies. 360

Should he their equal prove—forbid it Heaven!
But to such worth some favour should be given:
Or should he fail in what he rashly dares,
He meets the punishment himself prepares.

Thus

Thus Oronthea to the council said, 365
When from the eldest one this answer made.

Th' important cause whence we to change began
Our first design, and commerce hold with man,
Was not to guard our state from foreign bands;
For this our constant souls, our valiant hands, 370
Might well suffice—O! could we but extend
Our race as well, which time, alas! must end
Without the help of man—and hence we make
Our choice of youths, but only one we take
To wed ten dames, lest man the sovereign sway 375
From us should rend, and we in turn obey.

We need not males our empire to defend,
But must for progeny on these depend.
In this alone their prowess we require,
Nor other aid, nor other task desire. 380

To keep a chief whose nervous limbs combine
The strength of ten, must frustrate our design.

If such a troop his single arm can slay,
How many women shall he hold at bay?

Were such our present ten, one fatal hour 385
Had to themselves transferr'd the ruling power.

Ill suits it us, who wish to hold command,
'T' entrust our weapons in a stranger's hand.

Grant that thy boasted youth so far succeed,
That by his arm our chosen ten should bleed; 390
A hundred women, widow'd by his sword,
Shall see their husbands' deaths with tears deplor'd:
Then, should he 'scape with life, let him fulfil
Far other task than ten brave youths to kill:
If with a hundred dames he will supply 395
The place of those they mourn, he shall not die.

Artemia thus her cruel thoughts display'd,
(So was she nam'd) and had her counsel sway'd,
Elbanio, in the temple's dire abodes,
Had fall'n a victim to th' infernal gods. 400
But Oronthea, with a mother's love,
Reply'd, and every hearer's mind to move,
Such reasons urg'd, that most, with one consent,
Their suff'rage yielded for the queen's content.
Elbanio's matchless graces deep impress, 405
With powerful charm in every youthful breast,
Against those elders weigh'd, whose ruthless mind
With fierce Artemia's rigo'rous sentence join'd
T' enforce their ancient law; while some agreed
(No terms premis'd) Elbanio should be freed. 410
At length 'twas fix'd, the youth should grace obtain,
When in the list his arm the ten had slain;

And

And next, not with a hundred comforts try'd
A husband's fondness, but with ten supply'd.

Th' ensuing day, to liberty restor'd, 415
The knight receiv'd his armour, steed and sword:
Alone against the warrior ten he stood,
And one by one he shed their vital blood:
At night, to show in Cupid's school his art,
With ten fair dames he play'd the lover's part; 420
Who, taught by him connubial joys to prove,
All rose experienc'd votaries of love.

For this the youth with Oronthea won
Such added grace, she chose him for her son,
And gave him Alexandra's charms to wed; 425 }
With her the other nine, all whom he led, }
Ten virgins late to share his genial bed. }
She left the youth with Alexandra fair,
(From whom the land was nam'd) her kingdom's
heir,

On this condition, that his future reign 430
Might still this statute through the realm maintain;
That every wanderer there should lose his life,
Or meet ten warriors in unequal strife;
Those could he first in dangerous combat foil,
Then find, with ten fair dames, his fortune smile; 435

O'er these he should preside, and at his will
 Dismiss his comforts, or their places fill;
 And hold the sway, till to the land arriv'd
 Some foreign knight that him of life depriv'd.

Two thousand years have roll'd, since first was
 plann'd 440

This hateful law, and still it rules the land.
 Few days elapse, but, for a sacrifice,
 Some hapless stranger in the temple dies.
 Oft when, as chance directs, a fearless knight
 Dares, like Elbanio, arm him for the fight, 445
 Before th' opponent's foot his life he lays,
 And, ah! how rare the second proof essays:
 Such have been found, but such so rare befall,
 That on the fingers we their names may tell.
 Of these was Argillan—but little space 450
 He with his wives maintain'd the sovereign place;
 For hither driven by tempests from the deep,
 I clos'd his eyes in everlasting sleep.
 O had I shar'd that day his envy'd death,
 And not prolong'd in bonds a shameful breath! 455

Ver. 499. *That on the fingers, &c.—*] A ludicrous expression to denote how few adventures had been successful in their trial with the Amazons. The words are literal from the Italian.

Gay

Gay pleasure, smiling sports, and amorous toys;
Each soft delight that youth-like mine employs;
Rich vests and jewels that the person grace;
And, midst his peers, pre-eminence of place,
Heaven knows avail but little him, who crost 460
By envious Fortune, has his freedom lost!
Ah! wretch! that while I thus my bonds deplore,
Must never hope to quit this hateful shore!
To see vile sloth my fairest flower destroy
In prime of life, embitters every joy. 465
The fame of Clarmont wide her wings extends
To highest heaven from earth's remotest ends!
O! to my brethren's could I join my name,
My deeds with their's might honour's portion claim!
Hard is my lot, condemn'd a life to lead 470
In such vile service, like the wretched steed,
That blind, or lame, or with enfeebled force,
Unfit for battle or the dusty course,
Is with his fellow-brutes, that turn the foil,
Condemn'd to every task of servile toil! 475
Since death alone from such detested thrall
Can set me free, on welcome death I call.

Here Guido clos'd his tale, and curs'd the day
That gave him o'er the land detested sway;

Gave

Gave him from either field the prize to bear, 480
To slay the champions, and to please the fair.

Astolpho silent stood, awhile conceal'd,
Till now by many a certain mark reveal'd,
In him his kinsman Guido well he knew, 484
Who by an alien's bed his birth from Amon drew.

Then thus—Behold the English duke confess'd,
Thy own Astolpho here—he said, and press'd
The youthful champion with a close embrace,
While tears of pleasure trickled down his face.
What proof so certain, could we here receive? 490
What proof, dear kinsman, could thy mother leave
To speak thy birth, like what thy sword has shown
In glorious fight, to stamp thee for our own?

Guido in every land, save this, had view'd,
With joyful greeting, one so near in blood; 495
But saw him now with grief, since well he knew
The conquest his, destruction must ensue
To England's noble knight: Astolpho freed
From fear of death or chains, himself must bleed;
Where this good fortune finds, to that must ill suc-
ceed. 500

He mourn'd, that when his arm had won the fight,
Eternal bonds must wait each hapless knight;

Nor

Nor (should he perish in the doubtful strife)
Could each in freedom better hold his life.
If in the first their champion's arms prevail, 505
A female in the second field must fail.
Marphisa hence would conquer him in vain,
When victim she must fall, and captives they remain.
No less the valour of the generous youth,
His early manhood and heroic truth, 510
Such pity kindled in Marphisa's breast,
Such thoughts inspir'd in every valiant guest,
That freedom which his death alone could give,
On terms like these they wish'd not to receive;
And if Marphisa with his life must buy
Her comrades' safety, she with him would die.

To Guido then—Unite thee to our band,
And let us quit by force this hated land.
Such hopes, alas! are fruitless (he reply'd),
Our combat only must our fate decide: 520
Then she—This heart through fear shall never shun
The glorious task my arms have thus begun:
Nor know I any safer means to try,
Than what my sword and own right hand supply.
Such in the battle have I prov'd thy might, 525
With thee I dare the most unequal fight.

When,

When, on to-morrow's fun, the vulgar crew
 Shall throng the theatre our joust to view,
 Let us on all our deathful rage dispense,
 On those that fly, and those that make defence; 530
 To wolves and vultures cast their bodies dead,
 And see the flames on all their city spread.

Behold me ready (fearless Guido cry'd)
 To join thy arms, and perish by thy side:
 But never must we hope with life to fly; 535
 Suffice that unreveng'd we shall not die.
 Oft have I told, of this inhuman race,
 Ten thousand females in the crowded space:
 As many guard the castle, walls, and strand,
 That none, unquestion'd, can depart the land. 540

To whom Marphisa—Be their numbers more
 Than Xerxes muster'd on the Grecian shore:
 Than those rebellious spirits, justly driven
 To endless pains from blissful seats of heaven,

Ver. 543. *Than those rebellious spirits,—*] Some critics have condemned Ariosto for making Marphisa a Pagan (or rather Mahometan) allude to the fate of the angels, one of the traditions of the Christian church: but to this it may be answered, that the Mahometan religion has adopted many tenets of the Mosaic and Christian faith; and that, among others, the Koran refers to the rebellion in heaven.

RUSSELL.

Be

Be thou my aid—at least, assist not those ; 545
One day shall see me rout this host of foes.

Then Guido—Hear what haply may prevail,
All other means are vain if this should fail:
Know, none but females ever make resort
To view the harbour or frequent the port. 550
Of all my wives, in one I chief confide,
By many a proof of long affection try'd.
Alike with me, would she desire to break
My slavish bonds, could she my flight partake,
So from her rivals might she hope to prove 555
The single partner of my future love :
She in the bay, ere morn has clear'd the air
From murky shade, a pinnace shall prepare,
Which, amply stor'd, your mariners shall find
To plough the deep and catch the favouring wind.
You close behind my guiding steps pursue, 561
Knights, merchants, seamen, (a determin'd crew)
United firmly ; every welcome guest
That here has deign'd beneath my roof to rest.
Should aught oppose to intercept our course, 565
Your arms and valour must a passage force ;
And thus, I trust, with spear and sword in hand,
To set you free from this detested land.

Act

Act as thou wilt (Marphisa thus reply'd),
 I for my safety in myself confide. 570
 First by this trusty weapon's edge shall fall
 Each foe enclos'd within this fatal wall,
 Ere any eye behold me flying here,
 Or aught, that in this bosom argues fear:
 Let me, with dint of arms, by day depart: 575
 All other ways ill suit the dauntless heart.
 Yet were my sex disclos'd, a woman's name
 Would fair regard from every female claim.
 Here might I dwell esteem'd in highest grace,
 And midst their senate hold an honour'd place; 580
 But since with these I came, with these to share
 One common fortune is alone my care;
 Nor would I poorly freedom here retain,
 Or hence depart while these in bonds remain.

Marphisa thus, and by her words made known, 585
 That more her comrades' safety than her own
 Restrain'd her ardour; lest on them should fall
 Those mischiefs, which she sought t' avert from all.
 Else had she loosen'd on the female kind
 Her generous wrath; but now with cooler mind
 To Guido's conduct she the day resign'd. 591

Guido,

Guido, by night, his faithful dame address'd,
Aleria, of his comforts lov'd the best:
Nor needed much to move her gentle mind
To second what her dearest lord design'd. 595
A ship she chose with due provisions stor'd,
And all her wealthiest treasures plac'd on board;
Then with her comrades, feign'd at morning break,
In search of spoil a venturous cruise to make.
Meanwhile, beneath her roof she bade prepare 600
Spears, bucklers, swords, each implement of war;
With these against th' unnumber'd foes to stand,
To arm the merchants and the sailor band.
All night, against surprise, the guard they keep,
By turns they hold the watch, by turns they sleep; 605
And sheath'd in armour wait, with longing eyes
To see the dawning red in eastern skies.
Scarce had the day begun with beamy light
To chace from earth the gloomy veil of night:
Scarce had the offspring of Lycaon driven 610
The early ploughshare through the fields of Heaven,
When

Ver. 610. *Scarce had the offspring of Lycaon—*] By the offspring of Lycaon, the poet means Arcas, son of Calisto, and grandson of Lycaon, said to be placed among the stars, and called Bootes.
He

When in the theatre, the female throng,
 To view the combat, pour'd in heaps along :
 Thus, o'er the threshold of their peopled hive,
 When spring returns, the bees in clusters drive. 615
 With trumpets, drums, and horns, that echo'd
 round,

The tumult thickens; earth and skies resound ;
 While thus their lord they summon'd to the fight,
 To end his battle with the stranger knight.

In armour Guido, Sanfonetto came, 620
 Gryphon, and Aquilant, the martial dame*,
 With England's duke †; and next a mingled crowd,
 Some march'd on foot, and some the steed bestrode.
 From Guido's dwelling, to the port and bay,
 Their passage through the list of combat lay. 625
 Thus said the youth, and urg'd the valiant crew
 His bold example fearless to pursue.

* MARPHISA.

† ASTOLPHO.

He is feigned by the poets to be a husbandman in heaven, and to drive the northern wain, here, perhaps, by rather a forced construction, supposed to have been a plough. See OVID. Met. B. II.

Ver. 618. *While thus their lord, &c.*]—By this is meant Guido, who, as the poet tells us, for his singular valour had obtained a kind of sovereignty over the Amazons.

Silent

Silent he led them on, resolv'd to dare
The dreadful trial in the public square.
He enter'd now, a hundred in his train, 630
And eager strove the adverse gate to gain;
In vain he strove, while countless throngs enclos'd,
And with their glittering arms his course oppos'd.

Soon as they saw him head his following band, 634
They deem'd he meant with those to leave the land:
At once they seiz'd their bows, their shafts prepar'd,
And swiftly rush'd the portal's pass to guard.
Guido, his bold compeers with dauntless breast,
But chief Marphisa, brave above the rest,
Forget not now their dreadful swords to ply, 640
And every means to force the passage try.
But now so thick the arrows rain around,
That wounded some, some lifeless press the ground.
Deep, and more deep, th' unequal conflict grows,
Till valour shrinks before such host of foes: 645
In happy time each warrior's temper'd arms
Defend his bosom from invading harms.
Beneath him Sanfonetto's steed is slain,
And near him falls Marphisa's on the plain:
Then thus Aftolpho thought—What dangerous hour
Can better claim my horn's subduing power? 651

Since all our fwords avail not—let us prove
If this, as wont, can every fear remove.

Thus he, and to his mouth the horn applies ;
The earth refounds, and echoes rend the skies. 655
Each startled breast is seiz'd with sudden fright,
Each ready foot is turn'd to speedy flight ;
These from their seats aghast and trembling fall,
Those undefended leave the gates and wall.
As, when deep slumber every eyelid seals, 660
Where, by degrees, the flame close lurking steals
From beam to beam, till around it preys ;
Sudden awaken'd in the fiery blaze,
From room to room the shrieking wretches fly,
From roofs and windows leap, while from on high }
Some scape by falling, some by falling die. 666 }
Thus, careless of her life, and wild with fear,
Each flies the sound that thunders in her ear.
At every gate at once a thousand press ;
Heaps fall on heaps ; the driving throngs increase,
And choak the passage : numbers trod beneath 671
Are slain ; and numbers meet untimely death
From gates or ramparts cast : one sudden dies ;
One, with crush'd limbs a lingering victim lies !

Dire is the tumult, mingled cries ascend, 675
And loud laments the starry regions rend.
Where'er the horn is heard, they speed their pace;
Nor wonder if the vile ignoble race
With coward looks and panting hearts appear,
Since nature forms the dastard hare to fear: 680
But how of bold Marphisa shall I tell?
Of Guido Savage, prov'd in fight so well?
Of Olivero's* sons, whose martial praise
Such lasting honours to their house could raise:
Who late whole armies view'd with fearless eye, 685
And now, bereft of courage, trembling fly?
They fly like timorous doves, or helpless deer,
What time some strange approaching noise they hear
To every friend and foe alike is found
The spelful terror of the magic found: 690
Guido the brave, and Sansonetto, yield;
The brethren*, and Marphisa lately steel'd
To every chance, attempt to shun in vain
The fearful din which still their ears retain.
Meantime Astolpho through the city goes, 695
And with new breath his horn terrific blows.

* GRYPHON and AQUILANT.

One gains the sea ; one climbs the mountain's side,
And one in gloomy forests seeks to hide.

Some traverse many a league of country o'er,
And some review their native seats no more : 700

While some t' escape from land, would stem the wave,
And find in ruthless seas a watery grave.

Each house, or dome, is now an empty space,
And all the city shows a desert place.

Marphisa, Guido bold, the brethren two 705
Gryphon and Aquilant their flight pursue ;

With these the merchants and the sailor train,
In equal terror throng the beaten plain ;

And now they come, where near the castle rides
A vessel which Aleria's care provides : 710

With speed embarking, they forsake the shore,
Hoist every sail, and bend to every oar.

The city clear'd, Astolpho seeks the strand,
In hopes again to join his social band.

Now here, now there he turns, but views in vain 715
Th' abandon'd port, till casting tow'ards the main

His eager eyes, at distance far he sees

The vessel sail before the favouring breeze !

Forfaken thus, he other thoughts revolves
To quit the realm ; and many a scheme resolves 720

But

But let him go, nor heed though thus we make
The gentle duke his lonely journey take
Through barbarous realms, and unbelieving lands,
Where constant danger constant fear demands.
Yet wherefore should he fear, whose horn display'd,
In every danger brings resistless aid? 726

Now let his frightened friends our care divide,
Who quit the land, and plough th' unstable tide.
Full swell their sails, till distant from the shore
The horn, so late their dread, is heard no more!
One terror now dispell'd, the fear of blame 731
In every feature lights the glow of shame:
They dare not meet their comrades' eyes, but stand,
With down-cast eyes, a mute dejected band.

The pilot, on his course by Cyprus glides, 735
By fertile Rhodes; and cuts th' Egean tides.
A hundred islands vanish from his sight;
With these the Malean cape, a dangerous height.
Then scudding onward, with a steady wind,
He leaves the Greek Morea far behind. 740
From Sicily, the Tyrrhene surges cross,
He sails by Italy's delightful coast;

Ver. 721. *But let him go, &c.*] He follows him, Book xxii.
ver. 31.

And now to Luna's wish'd-for port he bends,
And hails his home and long forsaken friends ;
In thanks to Heaven for all his trials o'er, 745
By storms at sea and perils on the shore.

The warriors here with bold Marphisa find,
In happy time, a ship for France design'd.
The pilot these invites : the willing train
That day embarking, soon Marseilles they gain. 750

It chanc'd that Bradamant, whose noble hand
Deputed rul'd, was absent from the land :
Else had they, by the generous maid detain'd,
Beneath her friendly roof awhile remain'd.
They quit the ship—Marphisa bids adieu 755
To Guido's dame, to all the knightly crew.
It ill beseem'd, in one same troop (she cry'd)
To view so many knights of valour try'd :
While doves and storks are seen together join'd,
And deer and stags, with all the timorous kind ; 760
The falcon fierce, the royal eagle's race,
'That ne'er in others hopes of safety place,
Bears, lions, tigers, beasts that know not fear,
Unaided still, and single still appear.

Such were her words, though not alike they weigh'd
With all the rest ; but hence the wondrous maid 766
The

The champions leaves, and travels thence, alone,
 Through unfrequented woods and paths unknown.
 Gryphon the white, and Aquilant the black,
 Guido and Sanfonetto find the track 770
 That to a castle led, whose courteous lord
 Gave each a welcome to his bed and board:
 Courteous at least he seem'd, while each deceiv'd,
 His plaufive words and semblance fair believ'd;
 But, soon as sleep at night their eyes opprefs'd, 775
 He seiz'd them while they lay secure at rest;
 Nor from the captives would their chains withdraw,
 Till each had sworn t' observe a cruel law.

But ere we further speak what these befel,
 The deeds of brave Marphisa let us tell. 780
 Druenza past, the Seine and Rhodan's stream,
 At length she near a lofty mountain came:
 There by a flood, with sudden waters swell'd,
 An aged dame in fable weeds beheld:
 With travel spent she seem'd, and fore distressed, 785
 But more with heavy thought than toil opprefs'd.
 Lo! this was she, who far from haunts of men,
 Had liv'd with outlaws in the savage den;

Ver. 779. *But ere we further speak—*] He returns to these,
 Book xxii. ver. 372.

Where Heaven the Paladin Orlando drew,
To wreak full justice on that impious crew. 790
The beldame fearing death (and why such fate
She seem'd to fear, the sequel shall relate)
Through fields and forests fled remote from fight,
And shunn'd to meet the face of hind or knight.
She sees the vesture of the martial dame, 795
With foreign arms, a stranger born proclaim;
And hence she flies not, as she flies from those
Whose garb a warrior of the country shows.
Beside the stream she waits, and now she meets
Th' approaching knight, and low saluting, greets,
Beseeching, on his steed to waft her o'er 801
Th' opposing torrent to the further shore.

Marphisa, courteous from her earliest years,
Across the flood the ancient beldame bears,
And, past the ford, disdains not to convey 805
Behind her courser, till they pass'd a way
Heavy with slough—when clad in armour bright,
With trappings rich they met an unknown knight,
Gay pacing tow'rs the stream; with him a dame,
And single squire (his sole attendant) came. 810
Fair was the dame he brought, but fair in vain,
Her haughty carriage cast a deepening stain

On

On all her beauty, while her scorn and pride
Seem'd well-befitting him that grac'd her side.

This knight was Pinabel, whose treach'ry gave 815
To Bradamant the fall in Merlin's cave.

His sighs were breath'd, his scalding tears were shed
For her, whom now beneath his care he led;
For her, whom then the magic tower detain'd:
But when Atlantes' guile no more restrain'd 820
His captives, freed by brave Dordona's* dame,
She, not unmindful of her former flame,
To Pinabel return'd, and with him still
Wander'd from tower to tower, o'er forest, dale, and
hill.

Soon as she view'd Marphisa's aged crone, 825
The shameless fair, to taunting ever prone,
No more the venom of her tongue suppress'd,
But gave full vent to many a scornful jest.
Then brave Marphisa, little us'd to bear
Another's insult, or unpunish'd hear, 830
Inflam'd with anger, to the dame replies:
His partner should with her dispute the prize
Of beauty's bloom, with offer on her knight
To vouch the proof; and these the terms of fight,

* BRADAMANT.

That, if o'erthrown her lover prefs'd the field, 835
The damsel should her vest and palfrey yield.

Here Pinabello, rous'd by sense of shame,
To' accept the challenge and defend his dame,
His spear and buckler seizing, wheel'd his steed,
And on Marphisa rush'd with wrathful speed. 840
Her mighty spear in rest Marphisa held,
And full on Pinabello's helm impell'd
The forceful stroke that hurl'd him to the plain,
Where stunn'd he lay, as number'd with the slain.
At length he rose; when, victor of the day, 845
Marphisa from the stranger rent away
Her glittering ornaments and youthful vest,
And with the spoils her aged beldame drefs'd;
Then on the palfrey plac'd, which late before,
With other grace, the haughty damsel bore. 850
This done, she turn'd, the way with her to hold,
Who seem'd by drefs still more deform'd and old.

Three days they journey'd on, ere aught befel
In length of travel, worthy here to tell.
The fourth they met a knight, who bent on speed,
With goring rowels urg'd his flying steed: 856
Zerbino nam'd. the king of Scotland's son,
For manly beauty fam'd and battles won:

Of

Of vengeance late defrauded on the hand,
 Who dar'd his godlike mercy to withstand. 860
 In vain Zerbino long, incens'd, pursu'd
 The bold offender through the devious wood,
 Who knew so well to wind each tangled brake,
 So well th' advantage of the ground to take,
 That, shelter'd by surrounding shade, and veil'd 865
 In misty vapours by the morn exhal'd,
 He 'scap'd pursuit, resolv'd himself to hide,
 Till time should bid his prince's wrath subside.

Though ill-dispos'd, Zerbino could not hold
 From laughter, when he view'd the beldame old, 870
 Whose youthful habit seem'd so ill to grace
 Her doating age, and wither'd homely face.
 Then to Marphisa, prancing at her side:
 Thy prudence merits praise, Sir Knight (he cry'd)
 That chusing for thy mate so fair a dame, 875
 Thou need'st not fear a rival in thy flame.

By fallow hue, and wrinkled skin appears
 Th' ill-favour'd hag beyond the Sybil's years.

Ver. 877.—*wrinkled skin appears*

Th' ill-favour'd hag—] Dolce, the Italian commentator, here gravely observes, that the poet particularly dwells on this circumstance, to denote the years of Gabrina: and sagely concludes, that wrinkles are a mark of old age!

A grand-

A grandame ape she looks, in gamesome fort,
 With vesture clad to make the vulgar sport: 880
 Her eyes askance, with spite and anger roll'd: }
 What hurts a woman more than to be told }
 The world entitle her deform'd and old. }

The noble maid, here feigning wrath, to try
 What haply might ensue, made this reply. 885

She whom I guard, I swear by Heaven, has more
 Of beauty's claim than thou of courteous lore.
 Thou seem'st to her transcendant graces blind,
 To veil the baseness of thy dastard mind.
 What other knight that here should chance to meet
 A maid so young, in every charm complete, 891
 By one defended, but his strength would prove
 To win in her the sweet reward of love?

So well with thee she suits, (Zerbino cries)
 'Twere much injustice to dispute the prize; 895
 Nor shall I, lost to sense, my arms employ
 In such a cause—thou, what thou hast, enjoy.
 Yet, if thou seek'st with me in fight to join,
 On other terms I shall not this decline.
 But think me not so blinded, for her sake 900
 In list'd field a single lance to break.

Homely

Homely or fair, with thee she shall abide,
Nor will I love, so aptly pair'd, divide.
Heaven knows you both are join'd beyond compare,
If thou art valiant as the nymph is fair. 905

Marphisa then rejoin'd—In thy despite,
To win this damsel must thou prove the fight:
Ne'er shalt thou view her beauties with desire,
And not to win those peerless charms aspire.

I know not who (Zerbino made reply) 910
For such a conquest would the combat try;
Where courting danger with unfruitful pains,
The victor loses while the vanquish'd gains.

Since terms like these displease thee, hear me make
Another offer which thou well may'st take; 915
(Marphisa answered) if in joust, to thine
My arms submit, this dame shall still be mine;
But, if I conquer, her thou shalt receive;
Thus be our trial who the prize shall leave.
Should Fortune bid thee now resign the day, 920
'Tis thine to guard her as she points the way.

Agreed—Zerbino said, and speaking, wheel'd
His rapid courser to dispute the field:
Firm on his stirrups with collected might,
He stood; and, to direct his spear aright, 925
Against

Against her buckler drove the pointed wood;
Which, like a mount of steel, the shock withstood;
While she, with better nerve, his helmet found,
And instant hurl'd him senseless to the ground.

Zerbino, thus unhors'd, such shame confess'd,
As ne'er till then his generous soul depress'd. 931
Full many a warrior had his spear before
Cast from their seats: but now he fears, no more
His arm shall clear his fame, while lost in thought,
New anguish in his pensive bosom wrought, 935
To think henceforth, by sacred promise plight,
Himself constrain'd to rest the beldame's knight.

High seated on her steed, the conquering maid
Turn'd with a smile—Accept my gift (she said);
The more I see the dame in beauty shine, 940
It joys me more to see such beauty thine.
Then, in my place, her champion's charge sustain,
Nor let thy faith, so lately pledg'd, be vain.
Whate'er she bids, it fits thee to obey,
Guide of her fate, and partner of her way. 945

She stay'd not for reply, but left the knight,
And soon the forest shut her from his fight.

Ver. 947—*shut her from his fight.*] He returns to Marphisa,
Book xxv. ver. 676.

Then

Then to the crone he spoke (for sure he deem'd
 His conquering foe a warrior as she seem'd)
 Give me to hear what knight has stain'd my fame?
 The beldame answer'd, eager to proclaim 951
 What known would grieve him more—On yonder
 land

Thou fall'st (she cry'd) beneath a virgin's hand:
 A virgin, who for valour well may wield
 The warrior's falchion and the warrior's shield; 955
 Who now from Eastern realms, with sword and lance,
 Is come to prove the Paladins of France.

At this, Zerbino's soul indignant glow'd,
 While o'er his visage flush'd the changing blood;
 Through all his frame the deep contagion spread, 960
 And ev'n his armour seem'd to blush with red.
 Remounting on his steed, he curs'd in vain
 The nerves that could not late his feat maintain.
 The hag in secret smil'd, and every art
 Of malice try'd to' afflict his generous heart 965
 With cruel taunts, and bade him call to mind
 What chance had now to her's his will resign'd.

Zerbino heard abash'd, nor aught, reply'd,
 Constrain'd the worst, like weary steed, to' abide,
 That feels the bit in mouth, and rowels at his side. }

In

In frequent fighs he gave his anguish vent: 971
What dire reverse (he cry'd) has Fortune sent!
While she, the first in virtue as in charms,
Untimely torn from these desiring arms,
Is dash'd on rocks, or given the precious food 975
Of ravenous fish and fowls that haunt the flood.
Lo! her, that buried in her earthly bed,
Should long ere this the hungry worms have fed,
Thou now preserv'st beyond her loathsome date,
To add new torments to my wretched state. 980
Thus spoke Zerbino, hapless and forlorn:
Nor less in words and looks he seem'd to mourn
His odious mate, by luckless chance acquir'd,
Than loss of her whom most his soul desir'd.
If still your mind retains what once I told, 985
This hag was she who left the cavern'd hold,
Where Isabella, who Zerbino held
In love's soft bonds, some days a prisoner dwell'd:
Oft had she there rehears'd her story o'er,
How first she left her dear paternal shore; 990
How, shipwreck'd on the sea and shelvy strand,
She saved her life on Rochelle's welcome land.
Oft would the love-lorn maid delight to tell
Of lost Zerbino; oft with rapture dwell

On

On every grace: Soon as the beldame nigh 995
Had mark'd his mien and face with heedful eye,
She deem'd in him she view'd the noble youth
By Isabella wept with matchless truth;
Whose absence to her soul more sorrow gave
Than cruel bondage in the outlaws' cave. 1000

But when she now with fix'd attention heard
His words in bitterness of soul preferr'd;
She found 'twas he, who, by report misled,
His dearest Isabella, mourn'd as dead; 1004
And while the truth she knew, with impious spite,
To' exclude all gleam of comfort from the knight,
What best might raise his hope she kept conceal'd,
And what would give him pain, alone reveal'd.

Hear thou (she cry'd), from whom I thus have
borne

Such haughty carriage, such insulting scorn, 1010
Did'st thou but think what tidings I could tell
Of her on whom thy fond affections dwell,
How might'st thou speak me fair—but all in vain
Would force or soothing now that secret gain,
Which, had thy speech more gentle manners shown,
Thou might'st, perchance, discourteous youth, have
known. 1016

As the grim mastiff, who with fury threats
 Th' invading robber, soon his rage forgets,
 Whene'er, by scent of savoury meat allur'd,
 Or lull'd with spells by magic art procur'd: 1020
 Thus soon Zerbino, with a soften'd air,
 Besought the hag with tears and humble prayer,
 By Gods and men, no longer to conceal
 Whate'er of good or ill she could reveal.

Nought canst thou know, that known would
 yield delight, 1025

(Th' unfeeling beldame answer'd to the knight)
 She lives! whom now as dead thy sighs deplore,
 But lives to envy those who live no more.
 Full twenty, not by laws nor faith restrain'd,
 Thy Isabella long in bonds detain'd: 1030
 Then think, should fate restore her to thy arms,
 What hope remains to' enjoy her virgin charms?

Ah! hag accurs'd! (Zerbino made reply)
 How hast thou fram'd a foul detested lie!
 Though twenty might the captive fair detain, 1035
 Not one would dare her spotless honour stain.

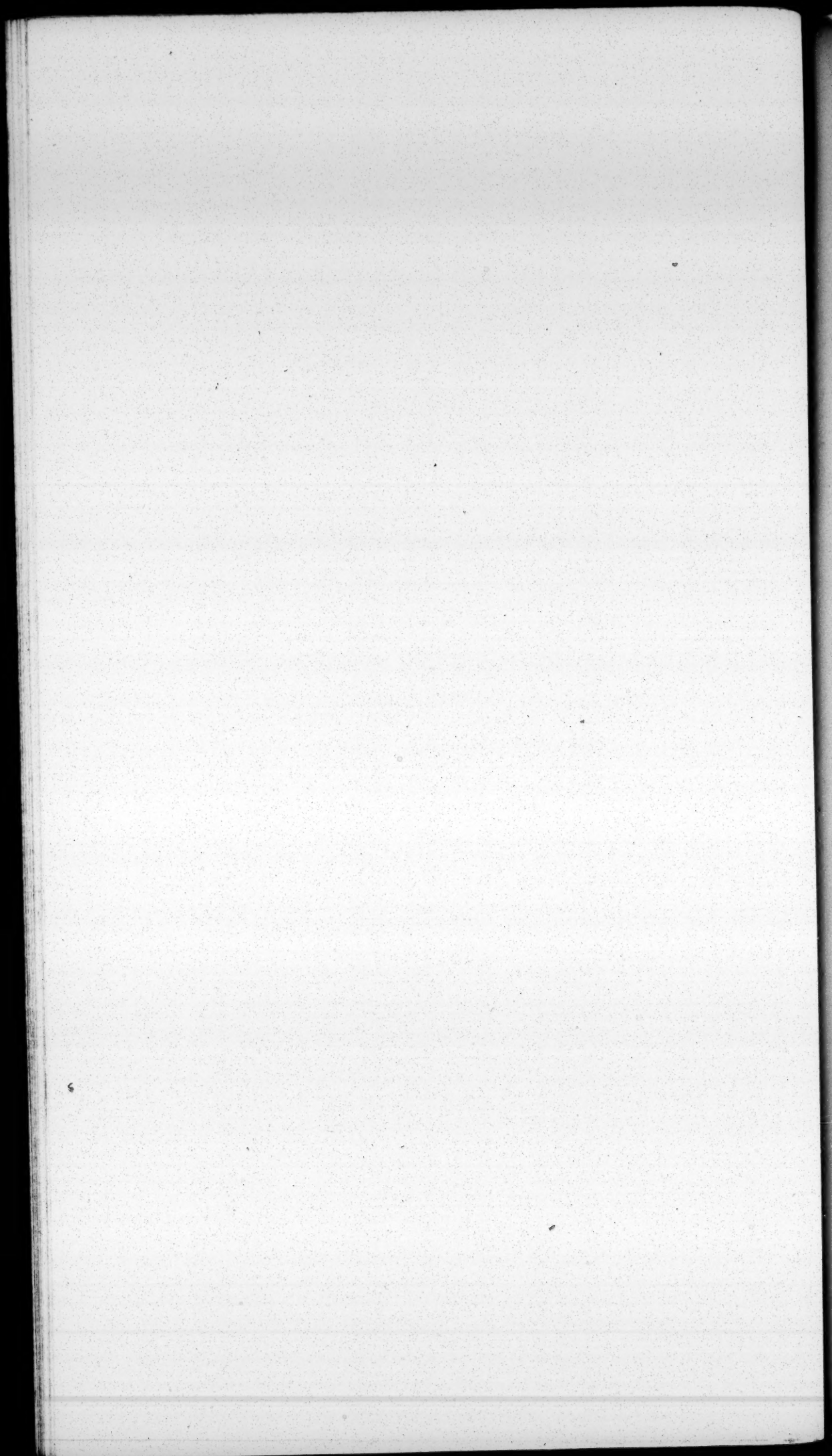
Thus he—then question'd when and where she
 view'd

His best lov'd; but she, in fullen mood,

Was

Was mute; determin'd to disclose no more,
Nor add a word to what she told before. 1040
Zerbino mildly first his speech address'd,
Then held his threatening weapon to her breast.
Alike in vain his prayer, his menace prov'd,
Nor prayer, nor threat, the stubborn beldame mov'd.
Yet what he heard, he ponder'd deep in thought, 1045
Till secret fears his jealous torment wrought.
He burn'd his Isabella's charms to view,
Through toils to follow, and to death pursue;
But durst not move without his partner's will,
Which late Marphisa bound him to fulfil. 1050
Thence, as she led, through solitary shade
And unfrequented paths Zerbino stray'd.
Whether o'er hill or vale their way they took,
Nor words they utter'd, nor exchange'd a look:
But when the sun, with slow declining ray, 1055
Had past the splendor of meridian day,
To break the silence, in the way there fell
A knight, whose name th' ensuing book shall tell.

END OF THE TWENTIETH BOOK.



THE
TWENTY-FIRST BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

ZERBINO, to defend Gabrina, engages in single combat with Hermonides, from whom he hears the particulars of her wicked life, and is warned of the mischiefs that may befall him from her company.

THE
TWENTY-FIRST BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

NOT strongest cords in circling bandage roll'd,
So closely brace ; not clasps of iron hold
The plank so firm, as plighted faith can bind
In never-loosening ties the noble mind.
The sages hence, of ancient time, have drest 5
Faith (heavenly Goddess!) in a spotless vest
Envelop'd fair, and white as falling snows,
That every casual soil and blemish shows.

Ver. 5. *The sages hence, &c.—*] That faith (or sincere dealing) was anciently painted in white garments, may be gathered from this passage in Horace.

—— et albo rara fides colit
Velata panno.

True honour must in even tenor run,
Before a thousand pledg'd, or given to one : 10
Not less in woods or lonely caverns known,
Far from the concourse of the peopled town,
Than at the full tribunal, where aloud
Each act is witness'd to the listening crowd :
Without or oaths, or forms judicial past, 15
A promise made but once should ever last.
This duty, still on virtuous minds imprest,
Was ever present to Zerbino's breast ;
So sacred held, that from his purpos'd way
He turn'd aside, through devious paths to stray 20
With her, whom like disease or death he view'd ;
Such sense of right his generous soul pursu'd.

Thus journey'd they, till from the western hills
The setting sun display'd his hindmost wheels,
When near advancing, with a fearless look, 25
A wandering warrior on their silence broke.
Well was he noted by the hateful dame ;
Hermonides, of Holland, was his name,
Who bore athwart, depicted on his shield,
A band vermillion in a fable field. 30
By features chang'd the crone her fears express'd,
And to the prince her humble speech address'd.

She

She bade him now in mind his promise bear
To her, who plac'd her in his guardian care:
For he, the knight who met them face to face, 35
Was foe to her, and foe to all her race:
Her dear-lov'd father perish'd by his guilt;
By him her only brother's blood was spilt;
And still he fought, with more than ruthless mind,
To glut his rage on all her wretched kind. 40
Woman! in me behold thy champion near!
(Zerbino cry'd) and banish every fear.

When now, with heedful eyes, th' approaching
knight

Had mark'd that face, so odious to his sight,
Prepare with me in single fight to meet, 45
(Aloud he threatening cry'd with generous heat)
Or quit yon' female's side, and by my hand
Give her to perish as her crimes demand:
If thou defend'st her cause, thou must be slain,
For thus it falls to those who wrong maintain. 50
Zerbino then, with courteous speech reply'd,
Such thoughts could only with the base reside;
Yet if he press'd the fight, he should not find
A flying foe; but will'd him first in mind

To

To ponder, how a knight of gentle strain 55
In helpless woman's blood his hand could stain.

These words, and many more, in vain enfu'd;
For deeds at length the contest must conclude:
Now for the tilt they wheel around the plain,
Then, turning furious, meet with loosen'd rein. 60
Not with such speed the whizzing rocket flies,
Dismiss with joy to burst in upper skies;
As in the dreadful shock, each fiery horse
Bore either champion to the headlong course.
Low aim'd Hermonides his spear, and try'd 65
Through the left flank his pointed wood to guide:
The feeble wood in crashing splinters broke,
And scarce the knight of Scotland felt the stroke.
Far different came his lance; with force impell'd,
The targe it pierc'd, and in the shoulder held 70
Its raging way, through plate and mail it flew,
And on the plain Hermonides o'erthrew.

Zerbino deem'd him slain; with pitying haste
He lighted, and his glittering helm unlac'd.
At length, as from a trance, the wounded knight 75
Recovering, on Zerbino fix'd his sight
Awhile in silence, till in mournful strain
He said—It grieves me little to sustain

This

This shame from one, whom well his deeds bespeak
The flower of wandering knights that danger seek. 80
But much to suffer in her cause I grieve,
Whose murderous guile accustom'd to deceive,
Could such a knight in her defence engage:
For ill it suits an arm so brave to wage
A strife like this—and when thou hear'st the cause 85
That on her head my righteous fury draws,
Remembrance ever will remorse awake,
To think thou thus hast wrong'd me for her sake.
And if my spirits last (though much I fear
My strength may fail) a story shalt thou hear, 90
Which told, will prove how far her deeds disgrace
A woman's name, and all the human race.
My youthful brother, on his fame intent,
From Holland once, our native dwelling, went,
And to Heraclius soon a knight was made; 95
(Heraclius, who the Grecian empire sway'd)

Ver. 95.—*Heraclius*.—] Heraclius was the sixteenth emperor of Greece, and succeeded Phocas. He was created emperor at Constantinople anno 611, and reigned near thirty years, and appears to be the same Heraclius in whose time the Saracen army, under Caled, laid siege to the city of Damascus; on which event Mr. Hughes founded his *Siege of Damascus*, the most excellent of modern tragedies.

A baron's

A baron's friendship in the court he prov'd,
 And he no less the courteous baron lov'd;
 Who kept, near Servia's lands, a lonely feat,
 A guarded fortress and a calm retreat. 100
 Argeo was his name, whose choice had led
 Yon loathsome woman to his nuptial bed,
 On whom he doated with so fierce a flame,
 As pass'd the bounds that rank like his became:
 But she, more changeful than the wither'd leaves 105
 Which Autumn every year of sap bereaves,
 When the chill winds, collecting to a storm,
 The verdant honours of the grove deform,
 Now sudden chac'd from her inconstant breast
 The love her husband there had once possess'd; 110
 And every art essay'd of loose desire
 To make my brother burn in lawless fire.
 Not steadier meets th' Acroceraunean shore
 (Of impious fame) the ocean's furgy roar:

Ver. 113. ——— *th' Acroceraunean shore*—] Horace calls the rocks of Acroceraunia infamous, because mariners there often suffer shipwreck.

Infames scapulos Acroceraunia—

LIB. I. Od. iii.

These are high rocks or mountains in Epirus, the tops of which are frequently struck with lightning, from which circumstance they derive their name. They are near the promontory that hangs over the Ionian Sea.

Not

Not firmer, midst the northern blast, appears 115
A pine, the produce of a hundred years,
(Far as whose head above the Alps ascends,
So deep its root beneath the surface tends)
Than now my brother met the dame's request,
A dame of every vice the fertile nest! 120

Meantime, as it befalls a wandering knight
Who danger seeks, on dangers oft to light;
It chanc'd my brother, on adventures bound,
Receiv'd in combat many a grievous wound.
Argeo's fort was near, no need to wait 125
For leave to enter at his friendly gate;
He came, as wont, resolv'd with medicine's power,
And rest, his health and vigour to restore.
Argeo, on some secret purpose bent,
As need requir'd him, from the castle went: 130
His comfort then the welcome time embrac'd,
To tempt my brother with her suit unchaste:
But he, a loyal friend as virtuous youth,
Impatient to behold his spotless truth
So hard beset; whom evils thus enclose; 135
At length of many ills the lightest chose;
Of many ills this choice the youth pursues,
To fly Argeo, and his friendship lose;

And

And dwell an outcast, where the shameless dame
Might never hear again his luckless name. 140
Hard was the choice, but harder to fulfil,
Against his duty, her ungovern'd will;
Or to her lord accuse a faithless wife,
Her lord who priz'd her dearer than his life.

Still pale and feeble, with his wounds he took 145
His arms and courser, and the place forsook;
In willing exile from his friend he went,
But envious Fortune cross'd his good intent.
Lo! to his home the husband came, and found
His wife in floods of seeming sorrow drown'd; 150
With hagg'd features and dishevell'd hair:
Surpriz'd, he question'd whence her deep despair:
Again, and yet again, her speech he woo'd
To learn the cause, while she, in sullen mood,
Within her bosom schemes of malice bred, 155
To' avenge her flighted flame on him who fled.
Nor deem it strange that she, refus'd so late,
Should sudden change her former love to hate.

At length—Ah! wherefore should I seek (she cry'd)
The guilt, incurr'd when thou wert gone, to hide?
Though from the world the horror I disguise, 161
It ever naked to reflection lies!

The

The foul that groans beneath a secret sin,
Feels its own weight of punishment within,
That far exceeds all outward pain of sense 165
Another might inflict for such offence:

If that, which force constrains, offence we name:

But be it as it may—attend my shame!

Then from its seat polluted let thy sword

To this unspotted soul release afford: 170

So shall these lids be clos'd in welcome sleep,

No longer after such disgrace to weep

With eyes cast downwards, fearing still to read

In every face abhorrence of the deed.

Know then—thy friend—thy bosom friend assail'd

My matron honour—and by force prevail'd: 176

Then dreading lest I should his crime recite,

The villain parted hence with speedy flight.

Thus she; and with these impious words addrest
Against his friend, inflam'd her husband's breast: 180

Too easy of belief, Argeo flew

With arms and steed, his victim to pursue;

The seeds of vengeance rankling in his mind,

Vers'd in the ways, my brother soon he join'd,

Who, faint with scarce heal'd wounds, in journey flow,

Pass'd pensive on, and little fear'd a foe. 186

Now

Now, in a lonely shade, with eager rage,
The baron rush'd th' unequal fight to wage.
My hapless brother vain excuses fram'd;
Incens'd Argeo loud the combat claim'd. 190
The one was strong, with deep resentment mov'd,
The other weak, and much his friend he lov'd.
Philander then (so call th' unhappy youth,
The guiltless victim of unspotted truth)
Who such a foe with strength unequal found, 195
Was vanquish'd in the fight, and captive bound.
Forbid it Heaven! tho' now to justice led
For guilt so deep as thine (Argeo said)
I e'er should kill the man I held so dear,
The man I deem'd to me with faith sincere 200
Ally'd so late——my friendship thus betray'd,
Our cause before th' impartial world be weigh'd.
As I in love excell'd, when once we lov'd,
So would I stand in hatred unprov'd.
Let other punishment thy deeds attend, 205
Than death from him who call'd thee once his friend.
Thus he; and on a courser bade be plac'd
A rustic bier of branches interlac'd,
Half dead thereon the wretched youth was laid,
And to the castle's neighbouring walls convey'd, 210
Where

Where, in the lone retreat, he lay confin'd,
The penance for his life design'd.
Imprison'd there, he found each lenient grace,
Save only, in excursion from the place,
To roam abroad ; in all beside, he still 215
Found every menial ready at his will.

But that abandon'd dame, whose impious mind
Renew'd the purpose she at first design'd,
Each day Philander view'd, and as she chose,
With ready key bade every gate uncloze: 220
My brother with insatiate will she press'd,
And bolder now preferr'd her foul request.
What more avails thy boasted truth (she cry'd),
Since my report has set that boast aside?
In vain thy virtue due regard may claim, 225
When each insults thee with a traitor's name.
How had thy honour and thy peace been spar'd,
Wouldst thou have given my love its dear reward?
Behold the guerdon of thy mighty pains,
Of all thy rigour, lo ! what fruit remains ! 230
Thou dwell'st in durance, never hence to part,
Till pity soften thy obdurate heart:
But if thou yield'st—I some device will frame
To set thee free, and heal thy wounded fame.

Philander answer'd—Hope not to prevail, 235
Nor think Philander's faith shall ever fail;
Though now it meets such unexpected lot:
Howe'er the world my merits has forgot,
One Power above my innocence can see,
And, at his will, my soul from trouble free. 240
If all suffice not—let Argeo take
This wretched being, his revenge to flake.
Perchance in Heaven hereafter may I find
That recompense, withheld me by mankind:
When he, who now detests my hated name, 245
As life shall cease to warm this mortal frame,
May to my mem'ry wrong'd at last be just,
And weep his dear companion laid in dust.

Thus oft the shameless woman strives to gain
Philander's love, as oft she strives in vain: 250
Blind with her lust, she feeds her flame within,
And hopes, at length, her lawless will to win;
Each rack'd invention in her thought applies,
And ponders all her magazine of lies;
A thousand schemes, now here, now there, re-
volved, 255
Nor yet on one her wavering mind resolves.

Six

Six months elaps'd since last the impious dame,
 As was her custom, to his presence came,
 And hence he hop'd that time had cur'd her lust-
 ful flame.

But Fortune, friendly to the wicked, brought 260
 The wish'd occasion which she long had sought,
 And gave her, by unheard-of guilt t' attain
 The purpose which she oft had try'd in vain.
 Between her husband and a baron reign'd
 A hatred, in their houses long maintain'd : 265
 Morando was he call'd, surnam'd the Fair,
 Who oft, Argeo absent, would repair
 Within his castle gates, and every outrage dare.
 But, while the lord was there, aloof he stay'd,
 Nor durst for many a mile the seat invade. 270
 Argeo, to entice him thither, feign'd
 A solemn vow to visit Sion's land.
 He seem'd to go, and all who view'd him, thought
 That, parting thence, Jerusalem he sought.
 Thus went the fame, while to his wife was known 275
 The truth entrusted to her faith alone.
 At close of eve the castle he regain'd,
 And every night within the walls remain'd.

With arms and ensigns chang'd, at dawn of day,
Each morning to the woods he took his way. 280

Now here, now there, with heedful watch he stray'd
Around his castle, lurking in the shade,
To mark, if trusting to the well-form'd tale,
Morando durst, as wont, his walls assail.

All day abroad he roam'd, but when he view'd 285
The light extinguish'd in the briny flood,
He came, where station'd his return to wait,
His wife receiv'd him at a secret gate.

All, save herself, believ'd that many a mile
Argeo travell'd; she with murderous guile 290
The curst occasion took, my brother found,
And with dire fraud her impious wishes crown'd;
While from her eyes, for ever brew'd at will,
She pour'd a shower of tears her breast to fill. 294

Where shall I fly? (she cry'd) what succour claim
To guard my own, to guard my husband's fame?
But were thy noble friend Argeo here,
Nor this, nor that, would give me cause for fear.
Thou know'st Morando well—Argeo hence,
Scarce Gods or men can yield me now defence
Against the traitor, who, with many a bribe 301
And menace, would seduce my menial tribe

To

To win me to his will—who, since he heard
My lord no longer in these gates appear'd,
On distant travel bent, has dar'd presume, 305
Unask'd, and hateful in my sight to come;
But, were my comfort now within my call,
Had kept aloof from this well-guarded wall.
The suit he once by distant message press'd,
He boldly now has face to face address'd; 310
So close address'd, I dread that future shame,
And dire misfortune will attend my name:
And but I late, with more attentive ear,
Gently appear'd his amorous tale to hear,
His passion would have seiz'd, by open force, 315
What now he hopes to win by milder course.
I promis'd soon to yield—yet ne'er design'd
To keep what, made through fear, can never bind.
For this, in thee alone I trust for aid;
Unhelp'd by thee my honour is betray'd, 320
With my Argeo's—which, if truth may lie
In friendship's words, you once esteem'd so high.
If thou refuse—I to the world attest,
Thy bosom wants that faith it once profess'd.
Nor was it virtue, but thy cruel scorn, 325
Urg'd thee to slight my tears, and see me mourn:

Argeo's fame pretended was the shield
That, held before, thy ruthless soul conceal'd.
With thee Love's theft had lurk'd secure from blame,
But with Morando all must know thy shame. 330

There needs not this (Philander cries) to move
A spirit ever prompt the most to prove
For my Argeo's sake——thy wish explain—
The faith I once possess'd, I still retain.
Whate'er the woes which undeserv'd I feel, 335
No deed of his abates my constant zeal:
Peril and death for him I dare oppose,
Be Fate itself, and all the world, my foes.

Then impious she—Thy weapon must destroy
The wretch who seeks to poison all my joy. 340
Fear not that evil shall thyself betide,
Do thou but firmly act as I shall guide.
Morando will return, when rising night
With murky shade obscures the setting light.
While, at a signal fix'd, prepar'd I wait 345
Unseen, to give him entrance at the gate.
Thee will I save in secret ambush place,
Without a ray the friendly gloom to chase;
Till, urg'd by me, his arms aside to lay,
He to thy justice falls an easy prey. 350

With

With cruelty unheard, the ruthless wife
 Thus form'd the snare t' entrap her husband's life:
 If wife she may be call'd, or rather nam'd
 A fiend, with more than fiend-like rage inflam'd.

When now the fatal night her shadows spread, 355
 She to her room my wretched brother led;
 There plac'd him with his arms and trusty sword,
 Till home return'd the castle's absent lord.
 All to her impious hopes in course beset;
 'Tis rare but evil deeds succeed too well. 360
 Philander deem'd in him Argeo's foe,
 And at his own Argeo aim'd the blow:
 The cruel weapon cleft his head in twain,
 No helm was there the fury to sustain:
 Speechless he fell; and bleeding as he lay, 365
 Without a struggle groan'd his life away.
 Unheard of chance! when thinking to bestow
 A friend's kind aid, he, with a fatal blow,
 Such greeting gave as fits the deadliest foe. }
 The husband thus dispatch'd; his murdering sword
 My brother to Gabrina's hand restor'd. 371
 Gabrina was her name, who every day
 Is born to curse, and lives but to betray!

She who, till then, conceal'd the horrid truth,
 With lighted torch approach'd th' unhappy youth,
 And bade him view how well his arm had sped, 376
 And show'd where lay his friend Argeo dead.
 She menac'd then, unless his pliant will
 The dictates of her hateful love fulfil,
 In every part to make his trespass known, 380
 Which all should tell, and he in vain disown.
 So must he die, with guilt of murder stain'd,
 A public victim to the hangman's hand.
 She bade him ponder, tho' to die he dar'd,
 If for a shameful death he stood prepar'd. 385

Philander, when his dire mistake he view'd,
 Congeal'd with horror and amazement stood;
 Remorse and rage to vengeance first impell'd
 His raving thought, and had not reason quell'd
 The rash design, suggesting, that expos'd 390
 In hostile walls he stood with foes enclos'd;
 Though now disarm'd, his hand the means had
 found
 To rend her mangled corse with many a wound,
 And with her bleeding members strew the ground. }
 As when a ship, that in mid ocean fails, 395
 Drives to and fro by two opposing gales:

Between

Between two evils thus Philander prest,
Debates, at length he fixes on the least:
Beside the certain view of speedy death,
He fears with infamy to yield his breath; 400
If in the castle should his deed be try'd,
And little time is left him to decide.

Fate urges now the dreadful draught to take,
Though all her arts before could never shake 404
His constant faith: the dread of death with shame,
Compels him, while he loaths her impious flame,
To plight his vow, to join with her's his hand,
When both had safely left the Grecian land.

Thus the foul forc'refs won his forc'd consent,
And with him closely from the castle went. 410

Again his home and friends Philander view'd,
But infamy in Greece his name pursu'd.

Still in his mind he bears, with thrilling pain,
His lov'd companion by his weapon slain;

Whence, for a murder'd friend, (Ah, dire to tell!)

He gain'd a Progne, or Medea fell; 416

And, but his honour plighted could control,

With powerful ties, th' emotions of his soul,

Her death had follow'd: yet his hatred more

Pursu'd that life, his sword, compell'd, forbore. 420

Ne'er

Ne'er was he seen, from that curst hour, to wear
A cheerful smile: his looks were all despair.

Sighs burst unceasing from his mournful breast:

Like young Orestes by the furies prest,

I dread avengement for the fatal deed, 425

That made his mother and Egystus bleed.

Deep, and more deep, grief work'd its canker'd way,
Till on his bed of sickness sad Philander lay.

The foul adultress, who his heart beheld
Still to her flame averse, indignant swell'd 430

To fierce resentment, till her thoughts, estrang'd

From all her love, again to hatred chang'd:

And soon, as once against the baron's life,

Against my brother's wrought this impious wife,

From this bad world to send, with arts accurst, 435

The second husband as she sent the first.

A leech she found, far better taught to kill
With poisonous, than with wholesome draughts to
heal;

And him she drew, by hopes of vast reward,

With her infernal purpose to accord, 440

The strength of some envenom'd juice to prove,

And from her loathing sight her lord remove.

Join'd with myself, a mourning friendly band
Enclos'd his bed, when with the cup in hand
The leech approach'd, and said the drink he bore 445
Would soon my brother's wasted health restore.
But ere the patient could the mixture taste,
Gabrina, with inhuman craft, in haste
Advanc'd, perchance a witness to remove
Who knew th' effects of her detested love: 450
Perchance in av'rice to withhold his gains,
The price agreed to recompense his pains.
She seiz'd his hand, while to the sick he held
The fatal goblet that the drink conceal'd.
Be not displeas'd (she cry'd), if thus I fear 455
For one whose life I ever held so dear.
Give me, by proof, to know thou hast not brought
Some potion here with fatal venom fraught:
Think not my lord the proffer'd cup shall take,
Till first thy lips the medicine's trial make. 460
Reflect, Sir knight! how stood depriv'd of speech,
In his own treason caught, the wretched leech:
The time, that press'd, allow'd not to revolve,
And fix his mind on what he should resolve:
Fearful t' expose his guilt, he deem'd it best, 465
Without delay, to give th' exacted test.

The

The sick man then, with unsuspecting thought,
Quaff'd all the remnant of the deadly draught.
As when a hawk, whose crooked talons feel
The partridge that he dooms his future meal, 470
Beholds the dog, late partner of his toil,
Assail, and from his grasp convey the spoil:
So this vile leech, by thirst of gain betray'd,
Remains deserted where he look'd for aid.

O unexampled guilt! henceforth on all, 475
Who thirst, like him, for gold, may equal justice fall!

The deed complete, the wretch prepar'd to take
His journey home, some antidote to make,
Ere yet too far the poison through his blood
Had spread; but fell Gabrina this withstood. 480
She vow'd he must not yet his patient leave,
Till all the virtue of his drugs perceive.

In vain with prayers, in vain with bribes he try'd
To be dismiss'd; the traitress hag deny'd.

All desperate now, he sees before his eye 485
Immediate death, nor from that death can fly.

Then to th' assistants he the truth expos'd,
Nor could the hag disprove the truth disclos'd.

Thus on himself that good physician brought
Such evil, as he oft for others wrought. 490

And

And now his spirit follow'd, to pursue
My brother's spirit that before him flew;
While we, who late with freezing horror heard
The truth that by the leech's tale appear'd,
Seiz'd on that hag, with fiercer rage indu'd, 495
Than every howling savage of the wood!
And in a dungeon shut, condemn'd by fire
For all her crimes in torture to expire.

Thus said Hermonides, and more had spoke,
To tell how from her prison walls she broke, 500
But, fainting with the anguish of his wound,
He backward fell, half senseless, on the ground;
While two attending squires, with ready care,
Of branches lopt a rustic bier prepare:
Here, as he will'd, Hermonides they laid, 505
And thus, disabled, from the field convey'd.
Zerbino seeks t' excuse his luckless deed,
Much griev'd by him to see the champion bleed;
Yet, as requir'd from those who knighthood claim,
He but defended her with whom he came: 510
Else had his plighted faith been empty wind;
For when the crone was to his charge consign'd,

Ver. 499. *Thus said Hermonides—*] This story of Gabrina and the physician, is to be found in the Golden Ass of Apuleius.

He

He vow'd his prowess should with arms oppose,
In her behalf whoever appear'd her foes.

In all beside, he stood by deed or word 515
Prepar'd to aid, with counsel or with sword,
A knight whose chance his generous heart deplor'd.

The knight return'd—He wish'd him to beware,
And rid his hands of fell Gabrina's care,
Ere her black artshad fram'd some guileful train 520
To make his grief and late repentance vain.
Gabrina silent stood, with downcast eye;
For truth confirm'd admits not a reply.

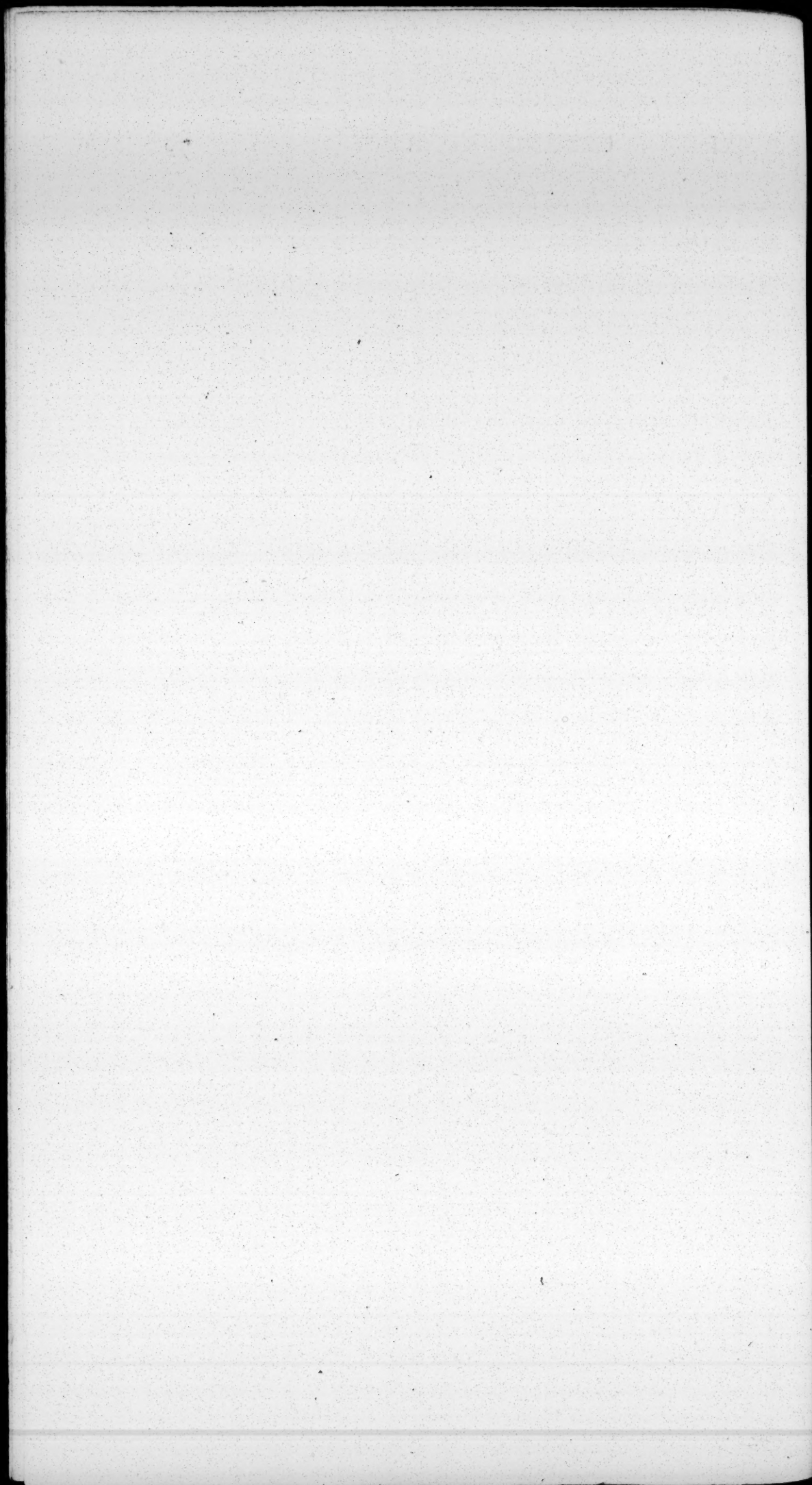
Departing thence, Zerbino took his way
Where with the hag his destin'd journey lay, 525
And curs'd her oft, to think his arms had brought
Such ill on him, whom for her sake he fought.
And since her impious life was brought to view,
By one who well her hidden actions knew,
His hatred kindled to so fierce a height, 530
He turn'd with horror from her loathsome fight.
She, who beholds Zerbino's secret mind,
Nor will in enmity remain behind,

Ver. 524. *Departing thence—*] The poet speaks no more of Hermonides.

Bates not an inch of malice, but repays
His hatred with her own a hundred ways : 535
Black poison rankles in her impious breast,
In every feature rancour stands confest.
Thus in firm concord, as the Muse has told,
Through the thick wood their friendly course they
hold:

When from the west the setting rays appear, 540
The noise of clashing arms and blows they hear;
The sign of battle nigh——With eager speed
To learn the cause Zerbino spurs his steed,
Nor seems more slow Gabrina to pursue— 544
What chanc'd th' ensuing book reveals to view.

END OF THE TWENTY-FIRST BOOK.



THE
TWENTY-SECOND BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

VOL. III.

G

THE ARGUMENT.

ASTOLPHO arrives at the enchanted palace of Atlantes, where, by the help of his horn, he dissolves the enchantment, and sets all the prisoners at liberty. Rogero and Bradamant meet and know each other: They depart together, and are addressed by a damsel, who engages them to undertake the deliverance of a youth condemned to be put to death. In their way they are stopped at the castle of Pinabello, where Rogero jousts with four knights, who were sworn to defend a law which Pinabello had made, to spoil all strangers who travelled that way. Rogero casts his enchanted shield into a well.

THE
TWENTY-SECOND BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

YE courteous damfels! to your lovers dear;
Content in love one favour'd youth to hear!
Though rarely, midst the female race, we find
A chosen few that boast a constant mind;

Ver. 1. *Ye courteous damfels!*—] Spenser seems to have imitated this, and the beginning of the xxviiiith Book in the following passage, where he is about to treat of the wanton Hellenore:

Redoubted knights and honourable dames,
To whom I level all my labours end,
Right fore I fear, lest with unworthy blames
This odious argument my rhymes should shend,
Or aught your goodly patience offend;
Whiles of a lovely lady I do write,
Which with her loose incontinence doth blend
The shining glory of your sovereign light,
And knighthood foul defaced by a faithless knight.

Book iii. C. ix. St. 1.

Be not displeas'd, if following thus my tale, 5
 Against Gabrina late I dar'd to rail
 In terms so harsh, and still, some future page,
 Prepare to scourge her more than impious rage:
 Such as she was, even such must I reveal,
 Nor (so my patron bids) the truth conceal: 10
 Yet think not hence their honours shall be lost,
 Whose purer hearts untainted faith can boast.
 Who to the Jews his Lord betray'd for gain,
 Nor leaves on Peter, nor on John a stain:
 Not Hypermnestra less in fame survives, 15
 Though her dire sisters fought their husbands' lives.
 For one on whose demerits here I dwell,
 (As wills the order of the tale I tell)
 A hundred shall adorn my better lays,
 And, like the radiant sun, diffuse their praise. 20

Ver. 15. *Not Hypermnestra*—] Hypermnestra was one of the fifty daughters of Danaüs, who being constrained to marry their kinsmen, the fifty sons of Ægyptus, all, but Hypermnestra, at the command of their father, slew their husbands on the wedding night; the oracle having foretold to Danaüs, that he should die by the hand of a son-in-law: but Hypermnestra saved her husband Linus, and contrived means for his escape.

See OVID'S EPISTLES,
 Hypermnestra to Linus.

Attend

Attend the vary'd story, which to hear
I trust that many lend a gracious ear.

We left the Scottish knight, with loud alarms
Of sudden tumult rous'd, and clashing arms.
Between two hills a narrow vale he found, 25
Whence late before he heard the falchion's found;
But now the noise was hush'd:—There pale he view'd
A knight just slain, and weltering in his blood.
His name I shall reveal—though now to seek
The eastern clime, no more of France I speak: 30
The Paladin Astolpho let us find,
Who to the west his speedy course design'd:
We saw him last, amid'th' inhuman band
Of warlike females, clear the hostile land;
While his pale friends their ready canvas spread, 35
And from the shore disgrac'd and trembling fled.
Now hear his tale—The knight those realms forsook,
And to Armenia next his journey took.
Some days elaps'd, he hasten'd to survey
Natolia, then to Brusia held his way; 40
Till coursing on beyond the midland tide,
He enter'd Thrace; by Danube's flowery side

Ver. 29. *His name I shall reveal—*] See Book xxiii. ver. 281.

His rapid progress through Hungaria held :
Then, as if wings his courser's speed impell'd,
He pass'd Moravia and Bohemia's land, 45
And where the Rhine o'erflows Franconia's strand.
To Aquisgrana, and to Arden's wood,
He came ; to Brabant next his way pursu'd ;
At Flanders then embark'd, where friendly gales
So fill'd the freighted vessel's flying sails, 50
Ere long Astolpho reach'd fair England's shore,
And gain'd the welcome port at noontide hour.

He press'd his steed, and, urging all his haste,
To London came ere eve her shadows cast ;
There heard that many a month its course had run, 55
Since aged Otho lay in Paris' town :
That many a baron, by example led,
Had left the land his glorious steps to tread.
He strait resolv'd to Gallia to resort,
And turn'd again to Thames's crowded port. 60
With hoisted sail he issues on the tide,
And bids the crew their prow to Calais guide.
A gale, that gently seems at first to sweep
The vessel's deck, and scarcely curl the deep,
At length, by slow degrees, increasing blows, 65
And now, beyond the pilot's wishes, grows

So

So near a storm, as claim'd his skilful care,
The conflict of the dashing waves to bear.
High o'er the furrow'd sea, before the wind,
The bark is driven, and quits her course design'd: 70
Now on the right, and now the left she rides;
As here, or there, malicious Fortune guides.
Near Roan, at length, she anchor'd on the strand:
Astolpho, when he touch'd the welcome land,
On Rabicano's back the saddle plac'd; 75
His limbs the mail, his side the falchion grac'd;
He grasp'd his fearful horn, a surer aid
Than marshall'd bands in glittering arms array'd.

Now passing through a wood, he reach'd a hill
Whose foot was moisten'd by a crystal rill; 80
What time the flocks to crop the mead forbear,
And to the fold or mountain cave repair.

With burning heat, with parching thirst distress'd,
The helm unlac'd, whose weight his brows oppress'd.
Amid the brakes his fiery steed he ty'd; 85
Then to the stream, for cooling draughts, apply'd
His eager lips; but e'er his lips essay'd
The moistening liquid, from the neighbouring shade
A rustic starting swift, his courser took,
Leapt on his back, and turn'd him from the brook. 90

Astolpho, rouzing at the noise, perceives
 Th' insulting outrage, and the fountain leaves.
 Resentment now the place of thirst supplies,
 And swift he follows as the caitiff flies.
 The caitiff led him on in doubtful chace, 95
 Now check'd, and now impell'd his courser's pace.
 At length (pursuing one, and one pursu'd)
 They left the forest, and the palace view'd,
 Where magic spells, without a prison, hold
 In lasting durance many a baron bold. 100

The rustic to the palace drives the steed,
 Light as the wind, and like the wind in speed.
 Astolpho, in his plated arms confin'd,
 With heavy shield encumber'd, lags behind:
 'Till now arriving, he beholds no more 105
 The hind and courser he pursu'd before.
 He plies his feet within the palace wall,
 Explores in vain each gallery, room, and hall:
 He knows not where the traitor has conceal'd
 His Rabicano, that in course excell'd 110
 The fleetest beast: at length his better thought
 Suggests, that all by magic art was wrought.

Ver. 100. —*lasting durance*—] The story of this palace is continued from Book xii. where it is fully described, ver. 54. and seq.

He

He calls to mind the book that to his hand
Sage Logistilla gave in India's land,
Which ever near he kept with heedful care, 115
A certain guide in every magic snare.
There full describ'd was all the costly pile,
Each strange enchantment, and each secret guile;
What means the foul magician's arts would quell,
And free his prisoners from the potent spell. 120
Beneath the threshold plac'd, a demon rais'd
The various wonders that the sense amaz'd.
The stone remov'd, where close the spirit lay,
The palace walls would melt in smoke away.
Thus said the book; and eager to pursue 125
The great adventure open'd to his view,
The Paladin advanc'd, with fearless pace,
To lift the ponderous marble from its base.
Soon as Atlantes saw his hands prepar'd
To set at large the castle's fatal guard, 130
Fearful of what might chance, his restless mind
Against the champion other wiles design'd:
By magic art, he gives the gentle knight
A different shape to each beholder's sight:
By this, a hind; by this, a giant seen: 135
By that, a warrior of ill-favour'd mien;

While

While each in him th' illusive image view'd,
For which he late Atlantes' steps pursu'd.

Impatient to retrieve their honours stain'd,
All turn'd on him—a fierce determin'd band! 140

Rogero, Bradamant, Gradasso there,
Iroldo, Brandimart in arms, prepare,
With brave Prasildo, by the spell misled,
To wreak their vengeance on Astolpho's head:
But, mindful of his horn, he soon depress'd, 145

With chilling terror, every haughty crest.
In happy time the fear-dispensing breath
Preserv'd the Paladin from instant death.
Soon as his lips have touch'd the narrow vent,
And wide around the deafening clangor sent, 150
Like trembling doves, when through the breaking
skies

Resounds the gun, each knight affrighted flies:
Not less th' enchanter old* the noise receives;
Not less amaz'd the wondrous dome he leaves,
To distance flies, heart-struck with deep dismay, 155
Till, dying off, the dreadful sounds decay!

* ATLANTES.

Ver. 153. *Th' enchanter old—*] Nothing more is heard of him
till the xxxvith Book, ver. 461.

The keeper * and his prisoners quit the walls;
 And numerous steeds with these forsake their stalls,
 That, not by halters, nor by reins confin'd,
 Through various paths their absent masters join'd.
 While thus the knight his fearful music play'd, 161
 Nor cat, nor mouse, within the dwelling stay'd;
 Ev'n Rabican had fled, but with his hand,
 Astolpho, as he pass'd, the steed detain'd.

And now th' intrepid duke (the forc'rer gone) 165
 From off the threshold heav'd a weighty stone.
 An image there he found, with many a spell
 Of hidden force, that boots not here to tell.
 Eager to quell the charm, with frequent stroke,
 Whate'er he found, the knight in pieces broke; 170
 For so the book (his sure instructor) shew'd;
 And all the palace vanish'd in a cloud!
 Held by a chain of beaten gold, he view'd
 Where good Rogero's winged courser stood;

* ATLANTES.

Ver. 161. ——— *his fearful music play'd,*

Nor cat, nor mouse, &c.——] Such passages as these, that are certainly ludicrous and familiar, and very different from the genius of Epic writing, will not admit of any elevation of language, and yet ought surely to be preserved, if a translation means to exhibit to an English reader the features of his author.

That

That winged courser which the wizzard * Moor 175
Had sent to bear him to Alcina's shore.

For which had Logistilla deign'd to frame
The reins and bit, with which to France he came;
And, borne from distant Ind to England's strand,
Had hover'd o'er vast tracts of seas and land. 180

I know not if your mem'ry still retains,
How to the tree that day the griffin's reins
Rogero left, when, bright in naked charms,
Albracca's princefs† vanish'd from his arms,
And left him whelm'd in shame—with rapid speed 185
Back to his lord return'd the faithful steed,
Wonderous to see! and stabled there remain'd,
Till the strong spell no more its power retain'd.

No chance than this could yield sincerer joy
To good Astolpho, who resolv'd t' employ 190
Th' occasion given new regions to explore,
Oceans and realms by him unseen before.
He prov'd how well the matchless steed could bear
The flying rider, when through fields of air
He late escap'd from India's fatal lands, 195
Freed by Meliffa from her cruel hands,

* ATLANTES.

† ANGELICA.

Who,

Who, with infernal arts, his limbs estrang'd
From human form, and to a myrtle chang'd.
He saw, how Logistilla, to restrain
The docile beast, had fix'd the curbing rein; 200
And mark'd the counsel which the prudent dame
Rogero gave, his furious course to tame.
The ready saddle on the steed he brac'd,
Then in his mouth the bit and reins he plac'd,
As suited best; for choice of bridles there 205
He found, which many a steed was wont to wear.
The thought of Rabicano yet detain'd
The knight, and yet awhile his flight restrain'd.
Well had he cause to hold the courser dear;
None better in the list with rested spear 210
Could run at tilt: with him at Gallia's land
He travell'd safe from Egypt's burning sand.
Debating long, Astolpho now decreed,
With some well-chosen friend t' entrust the steed,
Rather than leave him an valu'd prey, 215
For him whom Fortune led to pass the way.
His purpose fix'd, with looks intent he stood,
To mark if hind or huntsman cross'd the wood,
Who to some neighbouring town might lead behind
Good Rabicano, to his charge consign'd. 220

All

All day he stay'd, he stay'd till roseate morn
 Had made, in eastern skies, her wish'd return,
 When, scarce the shadows chac'd by misty light,
 He saw, or seem'd to see, a wand'ring knight.
 But, ere I speak the rest, I first shall tell, 225
 What to the noble Bradamant befel,
 With brave Rogero, when (dispell'd their fear)
 No more the clangor of the horn they hear.

The lovers saw, what, ne'er till then reveal'd,
 Atlantes long from either had conceal'd: 230
 Such mists of darkness o'er their fight he drew,
 That neither, till that hour, the other knew.
 On Bradamant Rogero fix'd his eyes;
 She on Rogero gaz'd with like surprize.
 Now round her waist his eager arms he throws, 235
 Her blushes kindling like the maiden rose,
 While from her lips each balmy sweet he proves,
 The blossoms of his first auspicious loves!
 A thousand times th' enraptur'd lovers meet
 In fond embrace; a thousand times repeat 240
 Their mutual vows, while scarce their breasts contain
 The joy that throbs in every glowing vein.

Ver. 225. *But ere I speak the rest—*] The poet returns to
 Astolpho, Book xxiii. ver. 66.

Yet

Yet much they sorrow'd, that by magic flight,
They liv'd so long estrang'd from either's sight,
And lost so many days of dear delight. 245 }

While Bradamant such favour'd grace bestows,
As the chaste maid to chaste affection owes,
She tells Rogero, would he hope to prove
The last dear blessings of connubial love,
He from her father Amon (ere the bands 250
Of sacred Hymen join their plighted hands)
Must gain consent, and in the hallow'd wave
With Christian rites his Pagan errors lave.

Rogero, for his dearest mistress' sake,
Not only yields a Christian's name to take, 255
Which once his father and his uncle bore,
Which all his ancestors profess'd before:
But vows, for her, in every chance to give
The remnant years Heaven doom'd him yet to
live.

Behold me sworn (he cries) at thy desire, 260
To plunge in water, or to plunge in fire.

Then first to be baptiz'd, and next to wed,
Rogero follow'd as the virgin led:

Tow'rds

Tow'rds Vallombrosa led the martial dame,
 That to an ancient abbey gave the name, 265
 Wealthy and fair, in hallow'd rituals blest,
 And courteous to receive the stranger guest.

Now issuing from the wood a gentle maid
 They chanc'd to meet, whose looks her grief be-
 tray'd.

Rogero prompt to feel for each distress, 270
 But chief those sorrows which the fair opprefs;
 With pity touch'd the tender mourner view'd,
 (Whose trickling tears her bloomy cheeks bedew'd)
 And, greeting mild, besought the cause to know,
 That o'er her features drew the clouds of woe. 275
 He spoke; when, lifting up her humid eyes,
 To speak her grief, she sweetly thus replies.

Ah! noble knight! thou soon shalt learn (she said)
 Why o'er my face these drops of anguish spread:
 I mourn a youth, who, ere the day is past, 280
 Must in a neighbouring castle breathe his last.

Ver. 264. *To Vallombrosa—*] The religious order of Vallombrosa had its beginning from one Giovanni Gualberto, a Florentine, who, forsaking the world, led a solitary life in a part of the Appenines called Vall' ombrosa (shady vale), and built a church there.

FORNARI.

He

He lov'd the fairest of the female train,
Whose fire, Marfilius, holds the rule of Spain.
Cloth'd in a female garb, with soft disguise,
His well-feign'd voice and downcast bashful eyes 285
Bely'd his sex——their loves awhile conceal'd,
At length ill chance to strangers' ears reveal'd:
Each tells his fellow, till at length they bring
(Tale following tale) the tidings to the king.
Last night a guard from stern Marfilius came, 290
To seize in bed the lover and the dame:
Thence were they hurried by the king's command,
And in the castle walls apart detain'd;
And, ah! I fear ere this day's sad decline,
The youth in torment must his life resign. 295
And now, to shun the dreadful sight I fly:
Alive they sentence him by fire to die.
Can e'er my soul again such sorrows know,
That every future bliss will change to woe,
Oft as I call to mind the cruel flame 300
That prey'd relentless on his beauteous frame?

While Bradamant attends the mournful tale,
She feels the sympathy of grief assail
Her tender breast; nor less she seem'd to feel,
Than if she trembled for a brother's weal. 305

Then, turning to Rogero, thus she cry'd :
For this unhappy let our force be try'd.
The damsel next she sooth'd—Compose thy grief,
Trust in our arms to bring unhop'd relief.
Lead to yon' wall—and should he yet survive, 310
No earthly power shall him of life deprive.

No less Rogero, than the warlike maid,
With ardour burns to give the wretched aid.
Then to the dame, from whose grief-swelling eyes
A torrent streams—Why this delay? (he cries) 315
Not tears avail in this disastrous state,
Conduct us instant to the scene of fate ;
And here I vow to free him from his foes,
Though swords and spears, by thousands rang'd,
oppose :

But hence—nor thus in fruitless converse stay, 320
Till yonder flames shall mock our long delay.

Thus he : The presence of the warlike pair,
Whose mien and words their dauntless souls declare,
Fair hope rekindles in the virgin's breast,
So late with sorrow and with fear oppress'd ; 325
Yet, pondering now she stood which path to tread,
Of two that tow'rd the destin'd castle led.

Should

Should we (she cry'd) the readiest track pursue,
That open lies extended to the view,
I trust in time our succour might we give, 330
Ere yet the pile the deadly flame receive ;
But since compell'd to take the winding way
Heavy and rough, I fear the closing day
To end our travel scarcely will suffice ;
And, ere we reach the place, the victim dies. 335

But wherefore must we shun (Roger cry'd)
The nearest path?—And thus the maid reply'd.

Athwart our way a stately castle stands,
Which Pinabello, Pontier's earl, commands ;
Who, scarce three days elaps'd, has fram'd a law 340
That knights and damsels holds in cruel awe :
He, worst of men, with every vice is stor'd,
Son of Anselmo, Altariva's lord ;
From whose ill-omen'd gate no knight nor dame
Departs unstay'd, and 'scapes untouch'd with shame.
Each thence must fare on foot : the warrior leaves 346
His shining arms ; the dame her vesture gives.
No braver knights, through all the realms of France,
Now hold, or many a year have held, the lance,
Than four, that rank'd in Pinabello's train, 350
Have sworn his lawless custom to maintain.

Hear whence it rose—and mark the law unjust
 On noble minds t' impose such impious trust!
 In marriage band is Pinabello join'd
 To one, the scandal of the female kind, 355
 Whom late, as with her lord she chanc'd to ride,
 A champion met that brought to shame her pride.
 Behind the champion, on his steed, was borne
 An aged crone, whom with insulting scorn
 Th' injurious earl address'd: the stranger-knight 360
 With Pinabello wag'd th' unequal fight.
 Him, strong in pride, but weak in arms, he struck
 Headlong to earth; then from her palfrey took
 The haughty fair one, left on foot, and dress'd
 The ancient beldame in her youthful vest. 365
 The dame dismounted (whom with rancorous mind
 In every evil Pinabello join'd)
 Declar'd no night nor day could rest afford,
 No future hour behold her peace restor'd,
 Unless a thousand dames and warriors foil'd, 370
 She view'd unhors'd, of vest and arms despoil'd.

It chanc'd that day to Pinabello came
 Four noble knights, the first in martial fame;
 These knights, with whom but few in arms could vie,
 Return'd from realms beneath a distant sky: 375

Ver. 360.—*the stranger-knight*—] See Book xx. ver. 807.

Young Sanfonetto ; Guido, Savage nam'd;
Gryphon and Aquilant, the brethren fam'd.
These Pinabello at his gate receives
With semblance fair, and courteous welcome gives.
At night, when sleep has lull'd each sense to peace,
He binds the four, nor will their bonds release, 381
Till all consenting, as his laws prescribe,
A year and day to dwell amidst his tribe,
Shall swear from knights their steeds and arms to
wrest, *L*
And from the damsels take their steeds and vest. 385
To this compell'd, with heavy hearts they swore;
And not a champion, to this fatal hour,
Has yet been found their vigour to sustain,
Who press'd not, at his length, the fearful plain.
Full many a champion there his fall receives, 390
And, stript of arms, on foot the castle leaves.
'Tis fix'd, that he who first with single force,
Shall pass the bridge, alone must run the course:
But should such lance against the stranger fail,
The rest united must his strength assail. 395
Reflect, if each can boast such nerve in fight,
What three must prove, when three their spears
unite.

Ver. 376. *Young Sanfonetto*—] See Book xx. ver. 769.

Ill suits it us, whose haste forbids our stay,
In such a strife to hazard new delay.

For grant, that here your arms attain success, 400
As sure your warlike looks proclaim no less,
Yet much I fear, ere evening shades arise,
The youth, for whom I weep, unaided dies.

Rogero then——'Tis ours, with ready zeal,
What honour bids, undaunted to fulfil; 405
The rest let Heaven direct, or Fortune guide,
What pow'rs soe'er in these events preside.
To thee the sequel of the jousts may show
How far our aid protection can bestow
On him, who, (as thou say'st) in youthful prime, 410
Is doom'd to death for such a venial crime.

Thus he. No more reply'd the gentle maid,
But through the nearest way the pair convey'd:
Not past three miles their journey they pursu'd,
When now the castle's bridge and gates they view'd,
Where arms and vests are left, where valu'd life 416
Is put to hazard in the dangerous strife.
The ready warder, on the ramparts plac'd,
Twice rung the warning—when, behold! in haste,
On a low steed an ancient fire appear'd, 420
And, as he came, his voice before was heard.

Hold,

Hold, strangers, hold! (he thus began to say)
 Here stop, and here the fine exacted pay!
 If yet you know not—let me now reveal
 Our law—and then he fought their law to tell, 425
 And next t' enforce, with accents sage and grave,
 That counsel, which to every knight he gave.
 Yon lady of her vest, my sons, bereave;
 And you (he cry'd) your arms and coursers leave:
 Nor think, by dreadful perils here enclos'd, 430
 With four such warriors safe to stand oppos'd.
 Arms, vests, and coursers we with ease obtain,
 But life, once lost, what prowess can regain?

Ver. 428. *Yon lady of her vest, my sons, bereave;*

And you (he cry'd) your arms and coursers leave.]

These kind of laws occur perpetually in the old romances, and several such are to be found in Spenser, particularly one, whereby knights and ladies pay toll of their beards and hair.

Ver 432. *Arms, vests, and coursers, &c.—]* Not unlike these lines in the speech of Achilles to the ambassadors in the IXth Iliad.

Loss herds and treasures we by arms regain,
 And steeds unrivall'd on the dusty plain,
 But from our lips the vital spirit fled,
 Returns no more to wake the silent dead.

POPE, ver. 528.

H 4

Rogero

Rogero cut him short—Forbear to show,
In fruitless prelude, what prepar'd we know. 435
No more—I come to prove, if what my will
Aspires to act, my actions can fulfil.
Arms, steed, and vest, I ne'er to others yield
For empty threatenings in an untry'd field ;
And well I trust, for founding words alone, 440
My partner never will resign his own.
But give me to behold them face to face,
Whose strength must purchase, to my foul disgrace,
My arms and steed—o'er yonder hill we haste,
Nor longer here the precious hours can waste. 445

To whom the fire—Lo! issuing to the plain
One warrior comes—nor were his words in vain.
High on the bridge appear'd the noble knight,
In crimson furcoat deck'd with flowers of white.
Now Bradamant Rogero su'd to trust 450
With her the first fair honours of the joust,
From his high seat to hurl the knight, who wore
The mantled red, with flowers embroider'd o'er.
In vain she su'd, Rogero this deny'd :
Constrain'd to yield, she silent stood beside 455
To view the course, while on himself her knight
Took all the hazards of the dubious fight.

Rogero

Rogero then enquir'd the warrior's name,
Who foremost from the castle's portal came.

'Tis Sanfonetto (thus the fire reply'd) 460

I know th' embroider'd scarf with crimson dy'd.

Now Pinabello issu'd from the gate,
And round their lord his thronging menials wait,
All well prepar'd of arms and steeds to spoil
The hapless knights that fell within the toil. 465

Swift to the course each hardy champion press'd,
And firmly held his ponderous spear in rest,
Huge, knotty, long, in native forests bred,
The tough ash ending in a steely head.

Of these full ten had Sanfonetto brought, 470
From neighbouring woods—of these in lances
wrought

He fix'd on two; in brave Rogero's hand
The one he plac'd, and one himself retain'd.

Now here, now there, impatient of delay,
Each silent wheels his steed a different way: 475
Then turning swift, with levell'd spears, they meet,
The field wide-shaking to their courfers' feet,
Against their shields unerring aim they took:
Rogero's shield receiv'd, unhurt, the stroke:

Atlantes'

Atlantes' buckler, whose enchanted light 480
With powerful splendor clos'd the gazer's sight,
Which still, unless by dangers great assail'd,
The knight beneath a filken covering veil'd.
Not so the adverse shield, whose mortal mold
Could not against the furious tourney hold. 485
As with a thunder-bolt the spear impell'd,
Reach'd the stunn'd arm that scarce the buckler
held,

And Sanfonetto, with a grievous wound
Forc'd from his feat, fell prostrate on the ground.
The first was he, of all the social train 490
Compell'd this ruffian usage to maintain,
That yet had fail'd a stranger to despoil,
Or from his feat dismounted, prest the foil:
Who laughs to-day, some future day may mourn,
And find to frowns the smiles of Fortune turn. 495

Again the warder rings th' alarm, and calls
The remnant three to quit the castle-walls.
Meantime it chanc'd, that Pinabello came
To noble Bradamant, and fought the name
Of him whose valour thus in arms excell'd, 500
Who thus the champion of his castle quell'd.

Eternal

Eternal Heaven to give his crimes the meed
They well deserv'd, conducts him on the steed
Which, scarce eight months elaps'd, the wretch be-
fore

From Bradamant, by murderous treason, bore: 505
When, if your mem'ry still the tale recall,
In Merlin's tomb he let the virgin fall;
What time the shatter'd pole receiv'd her weight,
And Heaven reserv'd her for a happier fate.

The generous heroine with a nearer view 510
Her courser saw, and soon the traitor knew;
His well-known voice recall'd, his every look
Intent she mark'd, and to herself she spoke.
Lo! this is he, who once my death design'd,
Now hither brought his due reward to find. 515

At once she threatens—to the sword applies
Her eager hand, and on the caitiff flies.
Between his castle and the recreant knight
She cuts off all retreat, nor can his flight
Avail to reach the gate; as to his den 520
The fox retires beset my dogs and men.
Defenceless, pale, before the martial maid,
He seeks, with coward cries, the woodland shade:

With

With trembling heart he spurs his rapid steed,
And hopes alone for safety from his speed. 525

The Dordon dame pursues, with all the zeal
Of just revenge, and whirls her fatal steel,
Now at his side or bosom aims the wound :
The tumult echoes, and the woods resound.

But at the castle Pinabello's crew, 530
Nor heard his clamours, nor his danger knew :
There every eye was fix'd, there every sense
Rogero's conflict held in deep suspense.

And now the three remaining champions came
From forth the fort ; with these the vengeful dame
Who fram'd the base device, while every knight 536
Blush'd with a single foe to wage the fight ;
And rather wish'd to die, in fame unstain'd,
Than meet a conquest so ignobly gain'd.

But she, who first th' unequal joust design'd, 540
T' enforce th' observance, bade them call to mind
How each had sworn, by every solemn tie,
For her revenge their strength combin'd to try.

But if my single weapon can suffice,
T' unhorse yon' warrior (Savage Guido cries) 545
Thus shall I joust !—be mine the single strife,
And if I fail—exact my forfeit life.

Gryphon

Gryphon and Aquilant alike demand
To meet the stranger singly, hand to hand.
To these th' imperious dame—Why thus delay 550
In vain debate the bus'ness of the day?
I brought you here yon' champion's arms to take,
Not other compacts, other laws to make.
Why urge not pleas like this, ere yet ye swore
T' observe my will, when first within my power; 555
Not when th' occasion calls you to maintain
Your promise given, nor make that promise vain?

Thus they—Behold (Rogero eager cries)
The knights and dame!—if still you seek the prize
Of armour, steed, or vest, why this delay 560
To seize with valour's arms the offer'd prey?

The matron there impels each tardy knight,
Here storms Rogero, and demands the fight.
Till forc'd at length, though fir'd with generous rage,
All rush at once the stranger to engage. 565

First rode the brother-chiefs, whose lineal name
From the high Marquis of Burgundia came;
Then mounted on a steed of heavier pace,
Behind them Guido Savage held his place.

Rogero, with the spear to combat drew, 570
The spear that Sanfonetto late o'erthrew:

His

His valiant arm the fated buckler bore,
 Which in Pyrené's hills Atlantes wore ;
 Th' enchanted buckler, whose resistless light
 At greatest need preserv'd the noble knight: 575
 Yet only thrice the wondrous aid he try'd:
 And only thrice the shield its aid supply'd:
 Twice, when the joys of shameful life he fled
 For feats, where virtue every blessing shed ;
 The last, when in the billowy main he left 580
 The raging orc, of precious food bereft.
 Save these alone, in every chance beside,
 A veil was wont the dazzling orb to hide ;
 At ease remov'd, whene'er the dangerous hour
 Requir'd the help of more than mortal power. 585
 Well-fenc'd by this, he rush'd with warlike heat
 Against the three that came his force to meet:
 Not more he fear'd each warrior's threat'ning spear,
 Than boldest hearts the weakest infants fear.
 At Gryphon now Rogero aim'd the thrust 590
 Above the buckler's verge, the furious joust
 His helm confess'd ; on either hand he reel'd,
 Till, falling from his steed, he press'd the field.

Ver. 578.——*the joys of shameful life he fled*

For feats, where virtue, &c.] See Book vii. and x.

Against

Against Rogero's buckler Gryphon sent
The spear, that erring from the knight's intent, 595
Struck on th' impassive orb with fruitless sound,
And, hissing, glanc'd across the polish'd round;
The veil it rent, and freed the magic rays:
Advancing Aquilant receiv'd the blaze;
On Guido Savage next, who came the last, 600
The wondrous targe its beamy splendor cast.
All fell—but little yet Rogero knew
The finish'd joust, and swift his falchion drew;
Then wheel'd his steed, when on the ground he
view'd

His prostrate foes with little force subdu'd; 605
Knights, squires, and each that issu'd to the plain,
The numerous foot, and all the female train.
Alike he saw, as if in battle dead,
Prone on the field each warrior courser spread:
Till, casting down a casual glance, he spy'd 610
From his left arm, dependent at his side,
The veil that still was wont the light to hide. }
Sudden he turn'd, and fought with anxious care
His bosom's best lov'd, the martial fair,
Her whom he left, where, plac'd apart, she stood 615
To mark the tilt begun; but when he view'd

The

The fair no more, he deem'd her course was bent
 To free the lover, and his fate prevent,
 Who, while she stay'd to' attend the castle's strife,
 She fear'd in flames would lose his hapless life. 620
 Among the rest he sees the gentle maid,
 Their fair conductress, deep in slumber laid:
 Her in his arms he rais'd, and plac'd before
 High on his steed, the pensive warrior bore: 625
 Her scarf he took, and wrapt with this, conceal'd
 The buckler's blaze; the blaze no more reveal'd,
 The virgin soon her heavy eyes unseal'd: }

Rogero's features flush'd with rosy shame,
 His down-cast looks his secret thoughts proclaim;
 He fears that all his former deeds are stain'd 630
 By such a conquest so ignobly gain'd.
 Where shall I turn? (he cries) How cleanse away
 The infamy of this ill-omen'd day?
 The triumph here atchiev'd each tongue shall tell,
 Not due to valour, but to magic spell. 635

Thus he: with generous wrath his bosom glow'd;
 When, what he fought, spontaneous chance bestow'd.
 Far in a wood's surrounding gloom he found
 A crystal well, that sunk beneath the ground:

Hither,

Hither, when fated herds their food forsake, 640

Oppress'd with heat they came their thirst to slake.

Rogero then—No more shall scorn or blame,

From thee, O shield! arise to taint my name:

No longer mine—I here such arms forego,

Nor more to thee will shameful succour owe. 645

Thus he; and swift alighting as he spoke,

With generous wrath a craggy stone he took;

To this the buckler, well secur'd, he ty'd,

And to the well consign'd—Lie there (he cry'd)

And with thee there my foul dishonour hide. 650

Deep was the well, and high the waters swell'd:

Ponderous the stone, and ponderous was the shield:

At once it sunk, a bed the bottom gave,

And sudden o'er it clos'd the limpid wave. 654

Soon Fame divulg'd the deed, with trumpet's sound,

Through France, through Spain, through every re-

gion round;

From tongue to tongue it spread, and many a train

Of noble knights aspir'd the prize to gain.

In vain they fought the forest, where, conceal'd

From human fight, remain'd the precious shield: 660

The dame who blaz'd the tale, refus'd to tell

What secret wood contain'd the fatal well.

When brave Rogero from the castle pass'd,
 Where, with such little strife, to earth he cast
 The knights of Pinabello's guard, and left 665
 The valiant four of strength and sense bereft :
 The light remov'd, each eye unclos'd appear'd :
 Each from the ground his limbs astonish'd rear'd :
 All day they commun'd of the wondrous shield,
 That every fight in magic slumber seal'd. 670
 While such discourse they held, the news arriv'd
 Of Pinabello, late of life depriv'd :
 Of Pinabello slain were tidings brought ;
 But yet unknown what hand the deed had wrought.
 Deep in a vale, with gloomy woods confin'd, 675
 The martial dame the recreant warrior join'd ;
 Where, in his panting breast and bleeding side,
 A hundred times the vengeful blade she dy'd,
 And from her seat the hateful spirit chac'd,
 Whose impious deeds had all the land disgrac'd. 680
 Then with that steed, which late with guileful art
 The traitor took, she hasten'd to depart

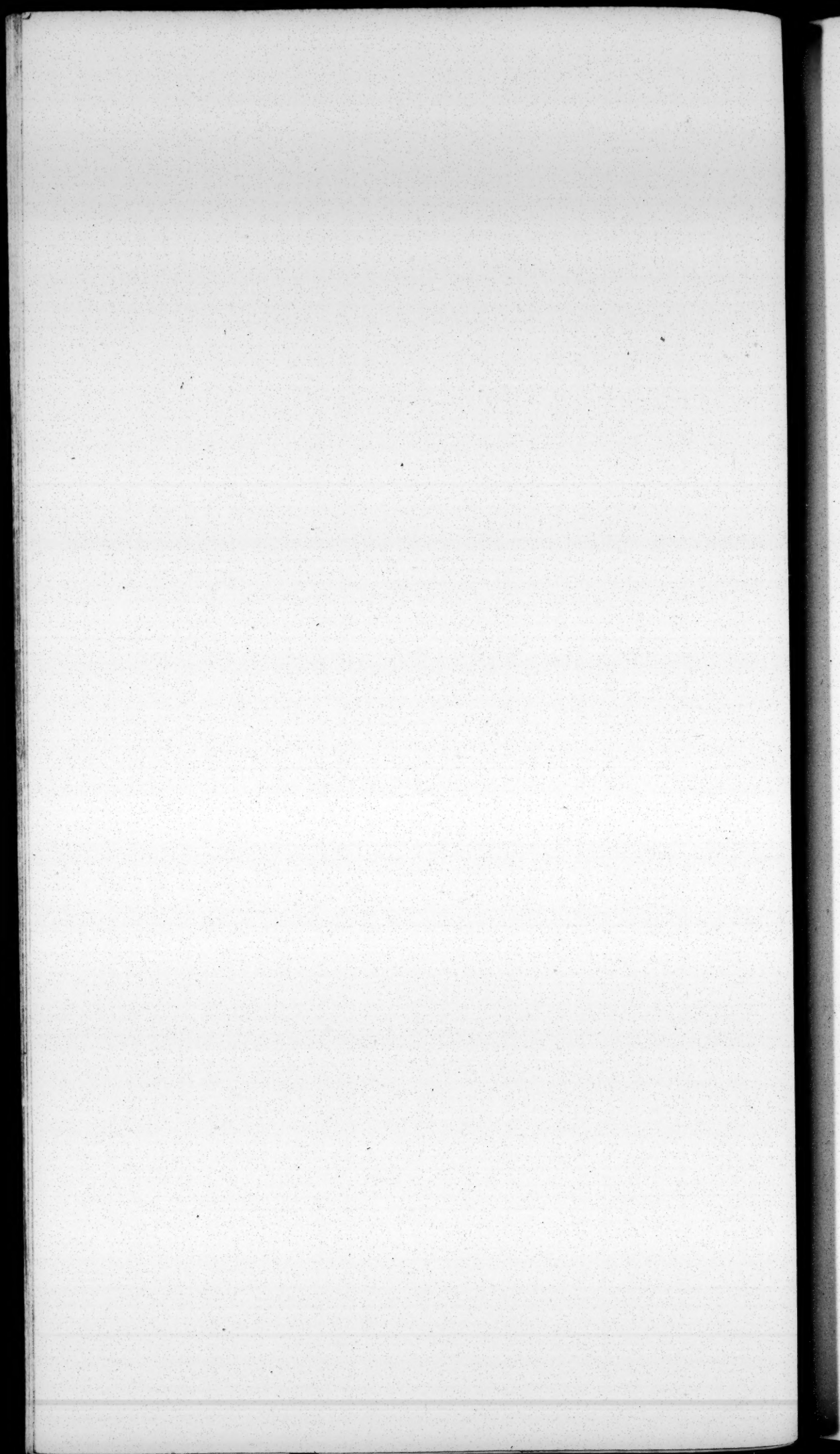
Ver. 673. *When brave Rogero, &c.*] He resumes the story of
 Rogero, Book xxv. ver. 28.

And

And join her knight, but now explor'd in vain
Her former way, and rov'd o'er hill and plain
With travel long, while Fortune yet deny'd 685
To lov'd Rogero's fight her course to guide.

But he that hears my tale with grateful ear,
Must to th' ensuing book the rest defer.

END OF THE TWENTY-SECOND BOOK.



THE
TWENTY-THIRD BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

BRADAMANT, after the death of Pinabello, loses herself in a wood: She is met by Astolpho, who, preparing to take his flight on the griffin-horse, entrusts her with the care of his horse Rabicano. Bradamant meets her brother Alardo, and goes with him to Mount Albano, from which place she sends Hippalca, her maid, on a message to Rogero, with his horse Frontino, which is afterwards taken from her by Rodomont. Zerbino, travelling with Gabrina, finds the dead body of Pinabello: He is accused of the murder, and led to be put to death. The arrival of Orlando and Isabella. Meeting of the two lovers. Mandricardo overtakes Orlando: their battle. Orlando, parting from Zerbino and Isabella, comes to the grotto where Angelica and Medoro used to meet. The manner in which he discovers the whole story of their love; which discovery ends in the total deprivation of his senses.

THE
TWENTY-THIRD BOOK
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IF man to man his friendly succour lends,
It rarely proves but fair reward attends
Each generous deed ; at least we thus ensure
Our future peace, and Heaven's regard secure.
Who wrongs another, soon or late shall find 5
The punishment for evil deeds assign'd.
The proverb holds, that oft man's wandering train
Each other meet ; but mountains fix'd remain.

Ver. 7. *The proverb holds, that oft man's wandering train
Each other meet ; but mountains fix'd remain.*

From the ancient proverb, *Mons cum monte non miscetur*. The meaning of this rather uncouth passage is, that though mountains never meet, yet men, who are ever wandering from place to place, may unexpectedly meet with those to whom they have done a good or ill turn, and find their punishment or their reward.

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Behold the fate on Pinabello brought
In due return for all the ill he wrought, 10
While gracious GOD (who ne'er beholds unmov'd,
With sufferings undeserv'd the guiltless prov'd)
The virgin sav'd; and ever saves the just,
Who, press'd with sorrows, place in him their trust.

When Pinabello deem'd the noble maid 15
His wretched victim, in the cavern'd shade
Alive entomb'd, he little fear'd to view
Her vengeful arms his ruffian guile pursue;
Where nought avail'd his near paternal seat,
T' avert the vengeance he was doom'd to meet. 20

Midst savage mountains Altaripa stands,
Fast by the confines of Pontieri's lands;
The hoary earl Anselmo's fair domain:
Of him was born, of unpropitious strain,
The wretch, whom now to 'scape from Clarmont's
sword, 25

No friends assist, no powers relief afford.
Beneath a hill the generous dame assails
His worthless life, and soon her arm prevails
Against a foe, that no defence prepares,
But heartless cries and unavailing prayers. 30

The

The traitor slain, who once her death design'd,
She turn'd again her dearest knight to find,
Whom late she left in strife unequal join'd. }
But envious Fortune through the dreary shade,
By winding paths her wandering steed convey'd, 35
And to the woodland's deep recesses led,
What time, at sun-set, eve her shadows spread.
Unknowing where th' approaching night to pass,
She check her reins, and on the verdant grass,
Beneath the covering trees, her limbs she throws, 40
To cheat the tedious hours with short repose;
Now watches Venus, Saturn, Mars, or Jove,
With every wandering star that shines above:
But from her sleeping sense, or waking mind,
Her dear Rogero never is disjoin'd. 45
She sighs to think revenge her soul could move
Beyond the softer claims of faithful love.
Insensate rage has fever'd me (she cries)
From all I hold most dear——Unheeding eyes!
That when I first my treacherous foe pursu'd, 50
Mark'd not the tracks of this perplexing wood:
Then had I known in safety to return,
Nor here been lost, dejected and forlorn.

In

In words like these she mourns without relief;
And now she broods in silence o'er her grief; 55
While winds of sighs, and floods of tears, that shake
Her gentle breast, a cruel tempest make.
At length the long-expected morn appears,
When streaky light the grey horizon cheers.
She takes her steed, that graz'd beside the way, 60
And, mounting, turns to meet the rising day.
Nor far she pass'd, when issuing from the wood,
She came to where the wizard's palace stood,
Where once, with many a fraud, Atlantes' power
Had long detain'd her in his magic bower. 65
Astolpho here she met, who lately gain'd
The griffin-steed, and but his flight restrain'd
For Rabicano's sake, till chance should give
Some trusty friend, his courser to receive.
The thoughtful Paladin his face display'd 70
Without his casque, when through the misty shade
The valiant Bradamant her kinsman knew,
And, greeting fair, impatient nearer drew;

Ver. 66. *Astolpho*—] The Griffin horse came into the possession of Astolpho in the xxiid Book, ver. 173, where he destroys the enchanted dwelling of Atlantes.

Declar'd

Declar'd her name, her covering helm unlac'd,
Reveal'd her features, and the knight embrac'd. 75

To Otho's son*, who fought some trusty friend
To whom he might his Rabican commend,
No friend could Fortune, at his present need,
Like Bradamant supply, to keep the steed
Till his return: and, when his flight was o'er, 80
Again in safety to his hand restore.

Their greeting done—Too long I here delay
My purpos'd voyage through a trackless way:
(Astolpho cry'd)—then to the maid he told
His flight design'd, and bade his steed behold. 85
She saw, but saw incurious what before
Her eyes had seen, when from th' enchanted tower
Atlantes' hand the flying courser rein'd,
And with the maid a combat strange maintain'd.
She calls to mind the day, on which she view'd 90
The parting pinions, and his course pursu'd
With sharpen'd sight, when, soaring to the skies,
He bore Rogero from her longing eyes.

Astolpho tells, that to her friendly care,
He Rabicano gives, beyond compare 95
First in the course, whose swiftness leaves behind
The arrow parting on the wings of wind;

* ASTOLPHO.

To her his ponderous arms he means to give,
And wills her at Albano these to leave
Till his return: since armour might be spar'd, 100
Or aught of weight that could his flight retard.
His sword and horn he still retain'd, though well
His horn alone could every danger quell.
To Bradamant he gave the golden lance,
Which once the son of Galaphron to France 105
From India brought, whose hidden power was such
T' unhorse each champion with its magic touch.

Astolpho now bestrode the winged horse,
And slowly through the air impell'd his course,
Till Bradamant, who watch'd his upward flight, 110
All in a moment lost him from her sight.
So from the port the guiding pilot steers
Who dangerous sands and rocky shallows fears;
But when he leaves the rocks and sands behind,
He shifts each sail, and scuds before the wind. 115

The duke departing thus: the martial maid,
In deep suspense, awhile in silence weigh'd
The means to Mount Albano thence to bear
Her kinsman's steed and implements of war.

Ver. 116. *The duke departing—*] He returns to Astolpho,
Book xxxiii. ver. 701.

For now, with fond desire, her bosom burn'd 120
To see Rogero, in his absence mourn'd,
Whom (yet deny'd to meet) her anxious mind
At least in Vallombrosa hop'd to find.

While silent thus she stood in pensive mood,
It chanc'd a peasant on the way she view'd, 125
And him she bade Astolpho's armour take,
And place the weight on Rabicano's back,
Then lead the courser which the burden bore,
With that which Pinabello rode before.

To Vallombrosa now she sought the way, 130
But doubtful of the track, she fear'd to stray
From where she wish'd; nor knew the peasant well
The country round, and thus, as chance befel,
A path she took, and through the forest wide
At random stray'd, without a friend to guide. 135

At noontide hour they left the covert shade,
And on a hill a castle near survey'd
Of stately scite; the virgin at the view
Believ'd in this she Mount Albano knew:
And Mount Albano there the dame beheld, 140
In which her mother and her brethren dwell'd.
This when she found, a sudden dread oppress'd
Her heart, that flutter'd in her tender breast.

Her

Her coming known, she fear'd the pressing train
 Of friends and kindred would her steps detain, 145
 Where she, a prey to love's consuming fire,
 Might view no more the lord of her desire;
 No more at Vallombrosa hope to meet
 Her dear Rogero, and their vows complete.

Awhile in doubt the maid her thoughts revolv'd;
 At length from Mount Albano she resolv'd 151
 T' avert her steps, and thence her journey bend
 To where the Abbey's hallow'd spires ascend.
 But Fortune soon, in this pursuit, bereft
 Her breast of hope; for, ere the vale she left, 155
 She on Alardo sudden chanc'd to light,
 And fought in vain t' elude her brother's fight.

This

Ver. 156. —*Alardo*—] One of Bradamant's brothers. Romance writers give different accounts of the genealogy of the house of Clarmont. Take the following as most consonant to Ariosto. Of Guido of Antona, son of Buovo and Orlandina, daughter of the King of Langues, were born Bernardo and Chiaramonte (Clarmont). The last died young without issue; and his parents, out of regard to his memory, gave the name of Clarmont to their castle, and called their family by the same name. Bernardo had eight sons, six legitimate, and two natural. The legitimate were duke Amon of Dordona; Buovo of Agramont, or Agrismont; Gerardo of Rosigniol

This youth had station'd many a warlike band
 Of horse and foot, which, at the king's command,
 He lately rais'd from all the neighbouring land. }
 Return'd, he chanc'd his sister here to meet; 161
 With seeming joy the pair each other greet;
 And now, in friendly converse, side by side
 Together join'd, to Mount Albano ride.

Thus to her native seats the fair return'd, 165
 Where Beatrice had long her absence mourn'd
 With fruitless tears, and sent, with anxious pain,
 To seek her through the realms of France in vain.
 But what are all the joys she here may prove,
 Her mother's fondness or her brethren's love, 170

signiol; Leone (Leo), afterwards pope; Otho king of England; and Milo of Anglantes. The natural sons were Anferigi, and Elfroi, by some called Sanguino and Dado. Amon had, by his wife Beatrice, five sons, Guichardo, Richardo, Rinaldo, Alardo, and Richardetto, and one daughter named Bradamant; and, according to Ariosto, he had by Constantia one natural son, afterwards called Guido Sayage. Buovo of Agrismont had two legitimate sons, Vivian and Malagigi; and one natural son called Aldiger, who entertains Rogero at the castle of Agrismont in the xxvth Book. Milo of Anglantes was father to the celebrated Orlando. Of Otho, king of England, was born Astolpho, the English duke.

See QUADRIQ della Storia d'ogni Poesia.

Compar'd to happiness so late possess'd,
When lov'd Rogero clasp'd her to his breast?

Herself restrain'd, she purpos'd one should bear
To Vallombrosa, with a faithful care,
Her greeting kind, and tell him, how, detain'd, 175
She with reluctance from his sight remain'd;
And urge (if need to urge him) for her sake
The name of Christian knight baptiz'd to take;
Then woo her friends his amorous suit t' approve,
And tie the knot of hymeneal love. 180

By this her messenger, his generous steed
She meant to send, which, fam'd for strength and
speed,

Rogero priz'd; for though the Pagan lands,
And all the realms the Gallic lord commands,
With him no steed the courser's glory claim'd, 185
Save Brigliadoro and Bayardo fam'd.

When good Rogero on the winged horse,
Was borne aloft, a strange and fearful course,

Ver. 186. *Save Brigliadoro and Bayardo—*]

———ne sotto il signor Gallo,
Piu bel destrier di questo, o piu gagliardo,
Eccetto Brigliadoro solo e Baiardo.

The poet seems here to have forgotten Rabican, Astolpho's horse.

Ver. 187. *When good Rogero, &c.*] See Book iv. ver. 321.

He left Frontino, which the martial dame
Receiv'd in trust (Frontino was his name), 190
And sent to Mount Albano, where, at large,
Wanton he rov'd, or fed beneath her charge
In plenteous stalls ; or when he felt the rein,
Was gently pac'd along the level plain: 194
Thus, pamper'd high in ease, and nurs'd with care,
His shining skin more sleek, more noble seem'd his
air,

And now she urg'd her virgins to divide
The pleasing task : each virgin soon apply'd
Her ready skill, and wrought, of golden thread,
A costly net, which o'er a pall they spread 200
Of finest filk, and on the courser plac'd,
With trappings gay, and rich embroidery grac'd.
A maid she chose, of long-experienc'd truth,
Whose mother, Callitrepheia, nurs'd her youth
From infant years : to her she oft confess'd 205
How far Rogero all her soul possess'd ;
Full oft his beauty and his valour prais'd,
And every grace above a mortal's rais'd.

To her she spoke—Whom sooner shall I trust
Than thee, Hippalca dear, discreet and just? 210

In whom, like thee, of all my train (she cry'd),
Can I the message of my heart confide?
Hippalca (such the faithful damsel's name)
Was now dismiss'd; and, by the love-sick dame
Instructed in her way, receiv'd, at large, 215
To him (her bosom's lord) this tender charge:
To say, that while in promise late she fail'd
To reach the abby's walls, no change prevail'd
In what she wish'd; but Fortune, that has still
The sovereign rule of all, oppos'd her will. 220
Thus she; then bade the damsel mount her steed,
And by the golden reins Frontino lead:
But should she, in her travel, chance to find
A wretch so senseless, or so base of mind,
To seize the steed, she will'd her but to tell 225
The courser's lord, his folly to repel:
For every knight she deem'd (whate'er his fame)
In arms must tremble at Rogero's name.
Much more she said, and by her trusty maid
To lov'd Rogero greetings kind convey'd; 230
Which, treasur'd in her mind, without delay
Hippalca bade farewell, and issu'd on her way.

Ver. 232. *Hippalca bade farewell*—] He returns to Bradamant,
Book xxxi. ver. 41.

For ten long miles the maid her journey held,
Through beaten path, thick wood, or open field:
One noon of day descending from a height, 235
As on a narrow pass she chanc'd to light
Stony and rough, fierce Rodomont she view'd,
Who arm'd, on foot a guiding dwarf pursu'd:
On her the cruel Pagan cast his eye,
And loud blasphem'd th' eternal Hierarchy, 240
To find a steed so stately and so fair
Without his lord, beneath a damsel's care.
Late had he sworn, his arm the goodly horse,
He first should meet, would seize by lawless force.
Lo! this the first, and never could his need 245
Attain the conquest of a nobler steed.
But since to take him from a helpless maid
Honour forbade, awhile in doubt he stay'd;
With eager looks he stood, and, gazing, cry'd,
Why art thou here without thy warlike guide? 250
O! were he here (Hippalca said), thy mind
Would soon forego the purpose it design'd:

Ver. 233.—*ten long miles*—] In the xxvith Book on the same occasion. Ariosto says thirty miles—a little slip of the memory.

Who this bestrides, excels thy arms in fight,
And through the world scarce breathes so brave a
knight.

What chief (return'd the Moor) thus treads the fame
Of others down?—Rogero—said the dame. 256

Then he—The steed I mine can nobly make,
Which from Rogero fam'd in arms I take ;
And should he seek his courser to regain
I here defy him to the lifted plain. 260

The weapon's choice be his—this prize I claim—
War is my sport, and Rodomont my name !
Where'er I go, my steps he may pursue,
My deeds shall ever point me forth to view :
I shine by my own light, and mark my course 265
With tracks more fatal than the thunder's force.

Thus he ; and turning, as these words he said,
The golden bridle o'er Frontino's head,
Leapt in the seat, and sudden left behind
Hippalca, weeping with distressful mind. 270
On Rodomont her threats and plaint she bends :
He hears, regardless, and the hill ascends ;
Led by the dwarf, rage flushing on his cheeks,
He Doralis and Mandricardo seeks ;

While

While the sad maid his flight indignant views, 275

And from afar with railings vain pursues.

Some other time shall speak what these besel:—

Here Turpin, from whose page the tale I tell,

Turns to the land, where bleeding on the plain

Lies the foul traitor of Maganza slain. 280

When Amon's daughter from the place in haste
Had turn'd her speed, and through the forest pass'd;

Thither, by different ways arriving, came

The good Zerbino, and her sex's shame*.

He sees the body lifeless in the vale, 285

And tender thoughts his noble breast assail.

There Pinabello lay; and, drench'd in blood,

Pour'd from such numerous wounds the crimson
flood,

It seem'd a hundred foes, in cruel strife,

Had join'd their swords to end his wretched life. 290

* GABRINA.

Ver. 277. *Some other time shall speak—*] He returns to Rodomont, Book xxiv. ver. 695. and to Hippalca, Book xxvi. ver. 401.

Ver. 181. *When Amon's daughter—*] See the beginning of the present Book, ver. 31.

Ver. 284. *The good Zerbino, and her sex's shame.*] See Book xxii. ver. 23.

The knight of Scotland was not slow to trace
The track of horses' feet that mark'd the place,
In hope to find where from pursuit had fled
Th' unknown assassin of the warrior dead:

Meantime he bade Gabrina to remain, 295
And there expect his quick return again.

Now near the scene of death Gabrina drew,
Exploring all the corse with greedy view;
For still to every other vice she join'd
The deepest av'rice of a female mind: 300
And, but she knew not to conceal her theft,
Her hands rapacious had the knight bereft
Of every spoil; the scarf embroider'd o'er
With gold, and all the glittering arms he wore.
A belt of costly work she safely plac'd 305
Beneath her vest, conceal'd around her waist:
'Twas all she could; and, while of this possess,
The beldame griev'd in heart to leave the rest.

Zerbino now return'd, who, through the wood,
With fruitless search had Bradamant pursu'd; 310
The day declining, swift his course address'd,
With that dire hag, to find a place of rest.

Two miles remote they to a castle came
(Fam'd Altariva was the castle's name),

And

And here they stay'd to pass th'approaching night 315
That quench'd the splendor of departing light.
Here scarce arriv'd, on every side they hear
The voice of loud laments invade their ear,
And tears they see from every eye-lid fall,
As if one common woe had seiz'd on all, 320
Zerbino ask'd what cause their anguish wrought;
And heard of tidings to Anselmo brought,
How, 'twixt two mountains, in a shady dell,
His son, his Pinabello, murder'd fell.
Zerbino, doubtful of some evil nigh, 325
Withdraws apart from every prying eye:
He deem'd their sorrows must his death bewail,
Whom late he saw lie bleeding in the vale.
Soon came the bier with Pinabello dead,
While torches round their solemn splendor shed, 330
To where the thickest ranks lamenting stand,
Raise the shrill cry, and wring the mournful hand;
Where every eye is fill'd with gushing woe,
And down the beard the trickling currents flow.
Above the rest, see, impotent in grief, 335
The wretched father mocks each vain relief;
While all, as sacred custom each invites,
Prepare, with pomp, the last funereal rites;

Such as of old were wont the dead to grace,
But now forgot by this degenerate race. 340

The herald from the prince declares aloud
The sovereign will, and to the murmuring crowd
Proclaims, that vast rewards the man shall gain
Who tells the wretch by whom his son was slain.
From tongue to tongue the spreading tidings flew,
From ear to ear, till all the city knew: 346

At last they reach'd the hag, whose fury fell,
Not bears or tigers of the woods excel;
Who now Zerbino to destroy prepares;
Whether through hatred that the knight she bears;
Or that her impious soul aspir'd to show 351

A human breast that mock'd at human woe;
Or whether greedy gain her purpose wrought;
The presence of th' afflicted earl she fought;
There first with plausible speech his ear amus'd, 355

And good Zerbino of the deed accus'd;
Then from her lap, to prove the story true,
The costly belt produc'd in open view,
Which, seen, too well the wretched parent knew. }

With tears, his hands uplifting to the skies, 360
Thou shalt not perish unreveng'd—he cries;

Then

Then bids surround the house. — With furious zeal
The people, rous'd, obey their ruler's will;
And while no danger near Zerbino knows,
He finds himself a prisoner to his foes, 366
Giv'n to Anselmo's rage, when sunk to rest
Refreshing sleep his heavy eyes depress'd.
Him in a darksome cell that night detain'd,
They kept in shackles and with bolts restrain'd,
Condemn'd to suffer for imputed guilt, 370
In that sad valley where the blood was spilt.
No further proof there needs the fact to try;
Their lord has sentenc'd, and th' accus'd must die.

When from her couch Aurora made return,
With many-colour'd beams to paint the morn, 375
The populace, as with one voice, demand
The prisoner's life, and press on every hand
With horse and foot; Zerbino thence they led
To atone the blood another's hand had shed.
On a low steed the knight of Scotland rides, 380
His noble arms close pinion'd to his sides,
And head cast down; but God, who still defends
The guiltless that for help on him depends,
Already watchful o'er the warrior's state,
Prepares to snatch him from the hand of fate. 385

Orlando

Orlando thither comes, and comes to save
The prince from shame and an untimely grave :
Along the plain he view'd the swarming crew,
That to his death the wretched champion drew,
Galego's daughter, Isabella fair, 390
With him he brought, who from the watery war
And bulging vessel sav'd, was doom'd, at land,
Th' unhappy captive of a lawless band ;
She, whose lov'd form Zerbino's heart possess'd,
More dear than life that warm'd his faithful breast.

Orlando since he freed the gentle maid, 396
Had watch'd beside her with a guardian's aid.
When on the subject plain her eyes she bent,
She ask'd Orlando what the concourse meant :
'Tis mine to learn the cause—the warrior said, 400
Then left his charge, and down the mountain sped.
The throng he join'd ; when, from th' ignoble train,
Zerbino soon he singled on the plain ;
And by his outward looks, at first, divin'd
The chief a baron of no vulgar kind. 405
Approaching near, he ask'd his cause of shame,
And whither led in bands, and whence he came.

Ver. 386. *Orlando thither comes—*] See Book xiii.

At this, his head the mourning champion rear'd,
And, when the Paladin's demand he heard,
With brief reply his piteous tale disclos'd, 410
In truth sincere, that soon the earl dispos'd,
For his defence, to combat on his side,
Who, guiltless of the charge, unjustly dy'd.
But when he found that Altariva's lord
The sentence pass'd, the noble sufferer's word 415
Stood more confirm'd; for in Anselmo's breast
He deem'd that justice ne'er her seat possess'd.
Between Maganza's house, and Clarmont, reign'd
A lineal hate, from fire to son maintain'd.
Then to the herd he turn'd with threat'ning cry: 420
Ye caitiff bands! release the knight, or die!
And who is he (said one to prove his zeal,
In luckless hour) that thus with words would kill?
Well was his menace, were our feeble frame
Of wax or straw, and his consuming flame. 425
He said; and ran against the knight of France;
And him Orlando met with rested lance.

That glittering armour, which the night before,
The fierce Maganza from Zerbino tore,
Now proudly worn, could not the death prevent, 430
Which from his spear Anglantes' warrior sent.

On

On his right cheek was driv'n the pointed wood,
And though the temper'd helm the point withstood,
The neck refus'd the furious stroke to bear;
The bone snapt short, and life dissolv'd in air. 435

At once, while yet the spear remain'd in rest,
He pierc'd another through the panting breast;
There left the lance, and Durindana drew,
And midst the thickest press resistless flew.
Of this, the skull in equal parts he cleaves; 440
That, of his head at one fierce stroke bereaves:
Some in the neck he thrust—a moment's space
Beholds a hundred dead, or held in chace.

A third are slain, or fly with fear oppress'd;
His thundering falchion knows nor pause nor rest. 445
This quits his helmet; that, his cumbrous shield;
All cast their useless weapons on the field.
Some leap the fosse, some scour the broad-way side;
In forests some, and some in caverns hide:
That day Orlando gave his wrath the rein, 450
And will'd that none should there alive remain:
As Turpin writes, from whom the truth I tell,
Full fourscore breathless by his weapon fell.

The throng dispers'd, he to Zerbino press'd,
Whose anxious heart yet trembled in his breast: 455

What

What words can speak Zerbino's alter'd cheer,
Soon as he saw his brave deliverer near?

Low had he fall'n, and prostrate on the ground
Ador'd the knight, from whom such aid he found;
But to the steed his feet with cords were bound. }

Orlando now his limbs from shackles freed, 461
And help'd him to resume his warlike weed,
Which late the captain of Maganza's train
Had worn in battle, but had worn in vain.

Meanwhile, Zerbino Isabella view'd, 465
Who on the neighbouring height attentive stood,
Till peace succeeding now to war's alarms,
She left the hill, and, bright in blooming charms,
Approach'd the field, where, when she nearer drew,
In her his best-belov'd Zerbino knew: 470
Her, whom from lying fame he mourn'd as lost
In roaring billows on the rocky coast.

As with a bolt of ice, his heart became
All freezing cold; a trembling seiz'd his frame:
But soon a feverish heat, succeeding, spread 475
Through every part, and dy'd his cheeks with red.
Love bade him rush, and clasp her to his breast:
But reverence for Anglantes' lord repress'd

His

His eager wish——and, ah! too sure he thought
 Her virgin grace the stranger's soul had caught. 480
 From sorrows thus to deeper sorrows cast,
 He finds how soon his mighty joys are past:
 And better could he bear to lose her charms
 By death, than see her in another's arms:
 But most to find her in his power he griev'd, 485
 Whose sword so late his threaten'd life repriev'd:
 No other knight (howe'er in battle prov'd)
 Had pass'd unquestion'd with the maid he lov'd.
 But what the earl had wrought that glorious day,
 Impell'd him every grateful meed to pay, 490
 And at the champion's feet his head subjected lay. }

Thus journeying on, the knights and princely
 maid,

At length dismounting, near a fountain stay'd:
 The wearied earl releas'd his laden brows,
 And bade Zerbino there his helm unclofe. 495
 Soon as the fair her lover's face espies,
 From her soft cheek the rosy colour flies,
 Then swift returns——so looks the humid flower
 When Sol's bright beams succeed the drizzling
 shower:

Careless

Careless of aught, she runs with eager pace, 500
And clasps Zerbino with a dear embrace;
There, while in silence to his neck she grows,
Tear following tear, his face and breast o'erflows.
Orlando, by their side, attentive stands,
Their meeting marks, nor other proof demands 505
That this unknown, who late his succour prov'd,
Was prince Zerbino by the dame belov'd.

Soon as the fair-one rais'd her voice to speak,
(The drops yet hanging on her tender cheek)
Her grateful lips no other could proclaim 510
Than the full praises of Orlando's name,
His valorous succour for her sake bestow'd,
And every courtesy the warrior show'd.
Zerbino, who so lov'd the princely maid,
Her good with his in equal scales he weigh'd: 515
Low at his knee the generous earl ador'd,
Who in one day had twice his life restor'd.

Ver. 500. — *she runs with eager pace, &c.*] It may at first appear extraordinary, that this discovery should not have happened before, as, by the poets words, Zerbino may be supposed to have declared his name to Orlando when the Paladin first accosted him; but, it must be observed, in defence of Ariosto, that Isabella was not then present, being left by Orlando on the hill during the battle.

Thus

Thus they: when sudden from the neighbouring
brake

They heard, with rustling sound, the branches shake;
Each to his naked head his helm apply'd: 520

Each seiz'd the reins; but, ere he could bestride
His foaming courser, from the woodland came,
Before their fight, a champion and a dame.

The knight was Mandricardo, who pursu'd
Orlando's track, till Doralis he view'd: 525

But when the warrior from her numerous band
Had won the damsel with his conquering hand,
The zeal grew slack that urg'd him to obtain
Revenge on him, who on the bloody plain
Had Manilardo quell'd, and young Alzirdo slain. }

He knew not yet the fable chief, whose might 531

Had rais'd his envy, was Anglantes' knight;

Though him his deeds and fair report proclaim
A wandering champion of no common fame.

Him, (while beside unmark'd Zerbino stood) 535

From head to foot fierce Mandricardo view'd,

And, finding every sign describ'd agree,

Lo! thou the man (he cry'd) I wish to see.

Ver. 523. — *a champion and a dame* —] See Book xiv.
ver. 490.

Ten days my anxious search, from plain to plain,
Has trac'd thy course, but trac'd till now in vain: 540
So have thy deeds, in all our camp confest,
With rival envy fir'd my swelling breast,
For hundreds sent by thee to Pluto's strand,
Where scarcely one escap'd thy dreadful hand,
To tell the numbers which thy weapon flew 545
Of Tremizen and Norway's valiant crew.

I was not slow to follow, with thy fight
To feast my eyes, and prove thy force in fight..
Full well-inform'd I know thy fable dress;
Thy vest and armour him I seek confests. 550
But were not such external marks reveal'd,
And didst thou with a thousand lurk conceal'd,
Thy bold demeanour must too surely tell
That thou art he in battle prov'd so well.

Thee too, no less, (Orlando thus reply'd) 555
All must pronounce a knight of valour try'd;
For thoughts so noble never shall we find
The tenants of a base degenerate mind.
If me thou com'st to view—indulge thy will—
Unloose my helmet, and behold thy fill! 560
But having view'd me well, proceed to prove,
(What most thy generous envy seem'd to move)

How much in arms my prowess may compare
With that demeanour thou hast held so fair.

'Tis there I fix my wish (the Pagan cry'd), 565
My first demand is fully satisfy'd.

Meanwhile the earl from head to foot explor'd
The Tartar round; but view'd nor ax nor sword;
Then ask'd what weapon must the fight maintain,
Should his first onset with the lance be vain. 570

Heed not my want—(he said) this single spear
Has often taught my bravest foes to fear:

A solemn oath I took, no sword to wear,

'Till Durindana from the earl I bear:

Him through the world I seek—for such my vow,
When first I plac'd this helmet o'er my brow: 575
Which, with these arms, I conquer'd—all of yore,
By Hector worn a thousand years before.

This sword alone was wanting to the rest,
How stol'n, I know not; but of this possess 580

'Tis said the Paladin subdues his foes,

And hence his courage more undaunted grows:

But let me once his arm in combat join,

His ill-got spoils he quickly shall resign:

Yet more—my bosom glows with fierce desire 585

To avenge the death of Agrican, my fire,

Whom

Whom base Orlando slew in treacherous strife,
Nor could he else have reach'd his noble life.

The earl, no longer silent, stern replies :
Thou ly'st, and each that dares affirm it, lies. 590
Chance gives thee what thou seek'st—Orlando view
In me, who Agrican with honour slew.

Behold the sword thou long hast wish'd to gain,
And, if thou seek'st, with glory may'st obtain.
Though justly mine, yet will I now contend 595
With thee my claim, and to a tree suspend
The valu'd prize, which rightly thou shalt take,
If me thy force can slay, or prisoner make.

He said ; and instant from his side unbrac'd,
And Durindana on a sapling plac'd. 600

Already now they part to half the space,
Sent from the bow a whizzing shaft can trace .
Already each on each impels his steed,
And gives the reins at freedom to his speed :
Already each directs his spear aright, 605
Where the clos'd helmet but admits the light.
The ash seems brittle ice, and to the sky
With sudden crash a thousand splinter's fly.
The staves break short—yet neither knight would
yield 609

One foot, one inch—then wheeling round the field

Again they meet, and with the vant-plate rear,
 Firm in each grasp, the truncheon of the spear
 That yet remain'd——these chiefs that once engag'd
 With sword or lance, like rustics now engag'd,
 (Whose blows dispute the stream or meadow's right)
 With shatter'd staves pursu'd a cruel fight. 616
 Four times they struck, the fourth the truncheon
 broke

Close to the wrist, nor bore another stroke :
 While either knight, as mutual fury reign'd,
 Alone with gauntlet arm'd the strife maintain'd : 620
 Where'er they grapple, plate and steely scale
 They rend afunder, and disjoint the mail :
 Not ponderous hammers fall with weightier blows,
 Not clasps of iron stronger can enclose
 With griping hold.—What now remains to save 625
 The Pagan's honour who the challenge gave?
 Or what in such a fruitless fight avail'd,
 Where more th' assailant suffer'd than th' assail'd?
 Each nerve exerting, with Orlando clos'd
 The Pagan warrior, breast to breast oppos'd, 630

Ver. 611.—*the vant-plate*——] The part by which the spear
 was held.

In hope with him the like success to prove,
As with Antæus once, the son of Jove.
With both his arms he grasps the mighty foe,
Tugs with full force, and draws him to and fro:
He foams, he raves—he scarcely can contain 635
His rising rage, nor heeds his courser's rein.
Collected in himself, Orlando tries
Whate'er advantage strength or skill supplies.
His hand he to the Pagan's steed extends,
And from his head by chance the bridle rends. 640
The Saracen with every art essays,
In vain, his rival from the seat to raise:
But, firm, with pressing knees, the earl preserves
His saddle still, nor here nor there he swerves;
Till, yielding to the Pagan's furious force, 645
The girth breaks short, and sudden from his horse
Orlando falls to earth; but still his feet
The stirrups keep, and still, as in the seat,
His thighs are strain'd, while, with a clanking sound,
His armour rattled as he touch'd the ground. 650
The adverse courser, from the bridle freed,
Across the champaign bends with rapid speed
His devious way: when thus the fair espy'd
Her lover borne from her unguarded side;

Without his presence fearful to remain, 655
His flight to trace she turns her palfrey's rein.

The haughty Pagan, as his courser flies,
Now foothes, now strikes, and now with angry cries
He threatens the beast, as if with sense indu'd,
Who, mindless of his lord, his way pursu'd. 660
Three miles he bore, and still had borne the knight,
But that a crossing ditch oppos'd their flight:
There fell both man and horse: the Pagan struck
Against the ground, but from the dangerous shock
Escap'd unhurt; and here concludes his speed: 665
But how unbridled shall he guide the steed?
Him by the ruffled mane, in furious mood,
The Tartar seiz'd, and now debating stood
What course to take.—To whom the damsel cry'd,
Lo! from my palfrey be your need supply'd; 670
Bridled or loose, mine, patient of command,
Obeys the voice, and answers to the hand.

The Pagan deem'd it ill a knight became
T' accept the proffer of a courteous dame,
But Fortune, wont her kindly aid to give, 675
Found better means that might his wants relieve,
And foul Gabrina to the place convey'd,
Who, since her guile Zerbino had betray'd,

Shunn'd

Shunn'd every stranger, like the wolf that flies
The hunters' voice, and dogs' pursuing cries. 680

This beldame now the youthful vestments wore,
Which Pinabello's dame had worn before;

She press'd the saddle (late her gorgeous seat)
And unawares the Tartar chanc'd to meet.

King Stordilano's daughter*, and her knight, 685
Beheld with laughter such an uncouth fight;

The dress ill-suited her unseemly shape,
And wither'd features like a grandam ape!

From her, his courser's bridle to supply,
He takes the reins, then, with a shouting cry, 690

Her palfrey drives, that to the forest bears
The trembling crone expiring with her fears,
Through rough or even paths, o'er hills and
dales,

By hanging cliffs, deep streams, or gloomy vales.

But let us to pursue her tale forbear, 695

When brave Orlando better claims our care:

His saddle now repair'd, and every need

Supply'd, he mounted on his warlike steed:

* DORALIS.

Ver. 695. *But let us to pursue, &c.—*] Gabrina is again introduced, Book xxiv. ver. 254.

L 4

Awhile

Awhile he stay'd, in hopes, ere long, to view
His foe return, the combat to renew;
At length resolv'd the Tartar to pursue.

700

Yet, ere he went, as one whose deeds exprefs'd
The soft effusions of a courteous breast,
With gentle speech, fair smiles, and open look,
He friendly leave of both the lovers took.

705

Zerbino mourn'd to quit the generous chief;
And Isabella wept with tender grief:

The noble earl their earnest suit refus'd

To share his fortune, and to each excus'd

What honour must deny; for greater shame,

710

He urg'd, could never stain a warrior's name,

Than, in the day of glorious strife, to make

A friend his danger, and his toils partake.

He then besought them, if the Pagan knight

(Ere him he met) should chance on them to light,

715

To tell him that Orlando meant to wait

Three days at hand to end the stern debate,

So late begun; and thence direct his course

To where Imperial Charles encamp'd his force,

Beneath the numerous banners rang'd, and where

720

The Tartar prince to seek him might repair.

This

This done: as each his separate fortune guides,
 Zerbino here, and there Orlando rides:
 But ere the valiant earl the place forlook,
 His trusty falchion from the tree he took. 725

The winding course the Pagan's steed purfu'd
 Through the thick covert of th' entangled wood,
 Perplex'd Orlando, who, with fruitless pain,
 Two days had follow'd, nor his fight could gain;
 Then reach'd a stream that through a meadow led, 730
 Whose vivid turf an emerald carpet spread,
 Spangled with flowers of many a dazzling hue,
 Where numerous trees in beauteous order grew,
 Whose shadowy branches gave a kind retreat
 To flocks, and naked swains from mid-day heat. 735
 With ponderous cuirass, shield, and helm, oppress'd,
 Orlando soon the welcome gales confess'd;
 And entering here to seek a short repose,
 In evil chance a dreadful feat he chose;
 A feat, where every hope must fade away 740
 On that unhappy, that detested day.

There, casting round a casual glance, he view'd
 Full many a tree, that trembling o'er the flood,

Ver. 723. *Zerbino here, and there Orlando rides.*] Zerbino and Isabella appear again, Book xxiv. ver. 105.

Inscrib'd with words, in which, as near he drew,
The hand of his Angelica he knew. 745

This place was one, of many a meed and bower,
For which Medoro, at the sultry hour,
Oft left the shepherd's cot, by love inspir'd,
And with Cathay's unrivall'd queen retir'd.
Angelica and her Medoro twin'd, 750
In amorous posies on the sylvan rind,
He sees, while every letter proves a dart,
Which love infixes in his bleeding heart.
Fain would he, by a thousand ways deceive
His cruel thoughts, fain would he not believe 755
What yet he must—then hopes some other fair
The name of his Angelica may bear.
But, ah! (he cry'd) too surely can I tell
These characters oft seen and known so well—
Yet should this fiction but conceal her love, 760
Medoro then may blest Orlando prove.

Thus, self-deceiv'd, forlorn Orlando strays
Still far from truth, still wanders in the maze
Of doubts and fears, while in his breast he tries
To feed that hope his better sense denies. 765

Ver. 747. ——— *Medoro, at the sultry hour—*] See Book xix.
ver. 251.

So the poor bird, that from the fields of air
Lights in the fraudulent gin or viscous snare,
The more he flutters, and the subtle wiles
Attempts to 'scape, the faster makes the toils.

Now came Orlando where the pendent hill, 770
Curv'd in an arch, o'er-hung the limpid rill:
Around the cavern's mouth were seen to twine
The creeping ivy and the curling vine.

Oft here the happy pair were wont to waste
The noontide heats, embracing and embrac'd; 775
And chiefly here, inscrib'd or carv'd, their names
Innumerable, witness'd to their growing flames.

Alighting here, the warrior pensive stood,
And at the grotto's rustic entrance view'd
Words, by the hand of young Medoro wrought; 780
And fresh they seem'd, as when his amorous thought
For bliss enjoy'd, his grateful thanks express'd,
And first in tuneful verse his passion dress'd.
Such in his native tongue might sure excel,
And thus, in ours transfus'd, the sense I tell. 785

Hail! lovely plants, clear streams, and meadows
green;
And thou, dear cave, whose cool-sequester'd scene

No sun molests! where she, of royal strain,
Angelica, by numbers woo'd in vain,
Daughter of Galaphron, with heavenly charms 790
Was oft enfolded in these happy arms!

O! let me, poor Medoro, thus repay
Such boundless rapture; thus with every lay
Of grateful praise the tender bosom move,
Lords, knights, and dames, that know the sweets of
love : 795

Each traveller, or hind of low degree,
Whom choice or fortune leads the place to see;
Till all shall cry—Thou sun! thou moon attend!
This fountain, grotto, mead, and shade defend!
Guard them, ye choir of nymphs! nor let the swain
With flocks or herds the sacred haunts profane! 801

These verses, in Arabian written, drew
The knight's attention, who their idiom knew.
To him full well was many a language known,
But chiefly this, familiar to his own : 805
Such knowledge fav'd him oft, in distant lands,
From wrong and shame amid the Pagan bands.
But, ah! no more th' advantage shall he boast,
That in one fatal hour so dearly cost!

Three

Three times he reads, as oft he reads again 810
The cruel lines; as oft he strives, in vain,
To give each sense the lie, and fondly tries
To disbelieve the witness of his eyes;
While at each word he feels the jealous smart,
And sudden coldness freezing at his heart. 815
Fix'd on the stone, in stiffening gaze, that prov'd
His secret pangs, he stood with looks unmov'd,
A seeming statue! while the godlike light
Of reason nearly seem'd eclips'd in night.
Confide in him, who by experience knows, 820
This is the woe surpassing other woes!
From his sad brow the wonted cheer is fled,
Low on his breast declines his drooping head;
Nor can he find (while grief each sense o'erbears)
Voice for his plaints, or moisture for his tears. 825
Impatient sorrow seeks its way to force,
But with too eager haste retards the course.
As when a full-brimm'd vase with ample waist
And slender entrance form'd, is downward plac'd,
And stands revers'd, the rushing waters pent, 830
All crowd at once to issue at the vent:
The narrow vent the struggling tide restrains,
And scarcely drop by drop the bubbling liquor drains.
He

He wishes—hopes—believes some foe might
frame

A falsehood to defile his fair-one's name; 835

Or with dire malice, by the tainting breath
Of jealous rage, to work his certain death.

Yet he, whoe'er the foe, his skill had prov'd
In feigning well the characters belov'd.

When now the fun had to his sister's reign 840

Resign'd the skies, Orlando mounts again

His Brigliadoro's back, and soon espies

The curling smoke from neighbouring hamlets rise.

The herds are heard to low, the dogs to bay;

And to the village now his lonely way 845

Orlando takes, there pale and languid leaves

His Brigliadoro, where a youth receives

The generous courser; while, with ready haste,

One from the champion has his mail unbrac'd :

One takes his spurs of gold; and one from rust 850

His armour scours and cleanses from the dust.

Lo! this the cot, where feeble with his wound,

Medoro lay, where wondrous chance he found.

No nourishment the warrior here desir'd,

On grief he fed, nor other food requir'd. 855

He

He fought to rest, but ah! the more he fought,
New pangs were added to his troubled thought:
Where'er he turn'd his sight, he still descry'd
The hated words inscrib'd on every side.
He would have spoke, but held his peace in fear 860
To know the truth he dreaded most to hear.

The gentle swain, who mark'd his secret grief,
With cheerful speech to give his pains relief,
Told all th' adventure that the pair befel,
Which oft before his tongue was wont to tell 865
To every guest that gave a willing ear,
For many a guest was pleas'd the tale to hear.
He told, how to his cot the virgin brought
Medoro wounded: how his cure she wrought,
While in her bosom, Love's impoison'd dart 870
With deeper wound transfix'd her bleeding heart:
Hence, mindless of her birth, a princess bred
Rich India's heir, she deign'd, by passion led,
A friendless youth of low estate to wed. }
In witness of his tale, the peasant show'd 875
The bracelet by Angelica bestow'd,
Departing thence, her token of regard,
His hospitable welcome to reward.

This

This fatal proof, his well-known present, left
Of every gleam of hope his soul bereft: 880
Love, that had tortur'd long his wretched thrall,
With this concluding stroke determin'd all.

At length, from every view retir'd apart,
He gives full vent to his o'erlabour'd heart:
Now from his eyes the streaming shower releas'd, 885
Stains his pale cheek, and wanders down his breast;
Deeply he groans, and, staggering with his woes,
On the lone bed his listless body throws,
But rests no more than if in wilds forlorn,
Stretch'd on the naked rock or pointed thorn. 890
While thus he lay, he sudden call'd to mind,
That on the couch, where then his limbs reclin'd,
His faithless mistress, and her paramour,
Had oft with love beguil'd the amorous hour:
Stung with the thought, the hated down he flies: 895
Not swifter from the turf is seen to rise
The swain, who, courting grateful sleep, perceives
A serpent darting through the rustling leaves.
Each object now is loathsome to his sight;
The bed—the cot—the swain—he heeds no light 900
To guide his steps, not Dian's silver ray,
Nor cheerful dawn, the harbinger of day.

He

He takes his armour, and his steed he takes,
 And through surrounding gloom impatient makes
 His darkling way, there vents his woes alone, 905
 In many a dreadful plaint and dreary groan.
 Unceasing still he weeps, unceasing mourns;
 Alike to him the night, the day returns;
 Cities and towns he shuns; in woods he lies,
 His bed the earth, his canopy the skies. 910
 He wonders oft what fountain can supply
 His flood of grief; how sigh succeeds to sigh.
 These are not tears (he cry'd) that ceaseless flow;
 Far other signs are these that speak my woe.
 Before the fire my vital moisture flies, 915
 And now, exhaling, issues at my eyes:
 Lo! thus it streams, and thus shall ever spend,
 Till with its course my life and sorrows end.
 These are not sighs that thus my torments show;
 Sighs have a pause, but these no respite know. 920
 Love burns my heart! these are the gales he makes,
 As round the flame his fanning wings he shakes.
 How canst thou, wondrous Love! surround with fire,
 Yet, unconsum'd, preserve my heart entire?

Ven 923. *How canst thou, wondrous Love! &c.*] It is much
 to be regretted, that the poet has disgraced this passage with such poor
 conceits.

I am not he, the man my looks proclaim, 925
 The man that lately bore Orlando's name;
 He, by his fair one's cruel falsehood, dies;
 And now, interr'd, her hapless victim lies.
 I am his spirit freed from mortal chains,
 Doom'd in this hell to rove with endless pains; 930
 A wretched warning here on earth to prove
 For all henceforth who put their trust in love.

Through the still night, the earl from shade to
 shade

Thus lonely rov'd, and when the day display'd
 Its twilight gleam, chance to the fountain led 935
 His wandering course, where first his fate he read
 In fond Medoro's strains—the fight awakes
 His torpid sense, each patient thought forsakes
 His maddening breast, that rage and hatred breathes,
 And from his side he swift the sword unsheaths. 940
 He hews the rock, he makes the letters fly;
 The shatter'd fragments mount into the sky:
 Hapless the cave, whose stones, the trees, whose rind
 Bear with Angelica Medoro join'd;

Ver. 925. *I am not he—*] Imitated from Catullus.
 Non ego sed tenuis vapulat umbra mea.

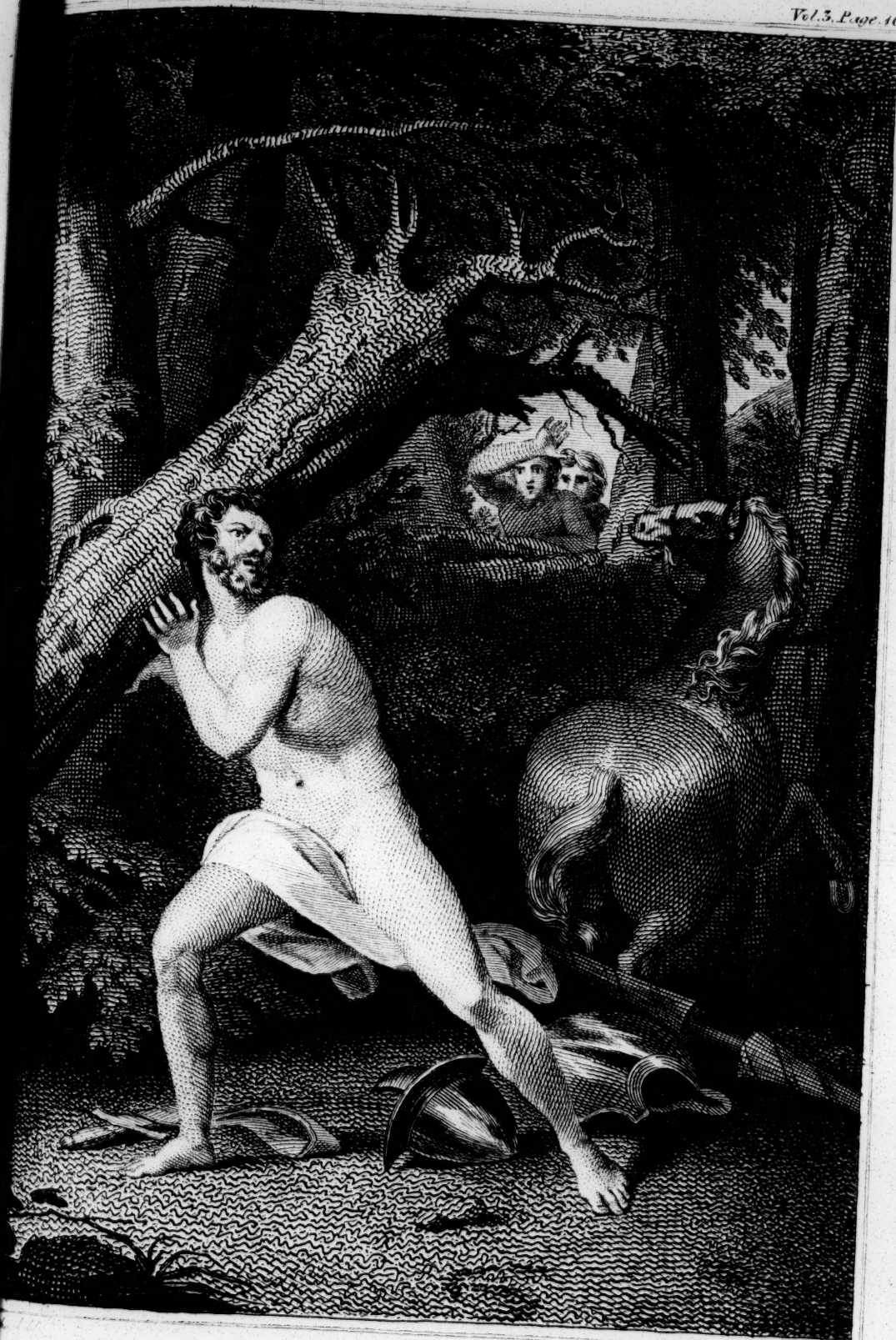
From

From that curs'd day no longer to receive, 945
And flocks or swains with cooling shade relieve;
While that fair fountain, late so silvery pure,
Remain'd as little from his arm secure:
Together boughs and earthen clods he drew,
Craggs, stones, and trunks, and in the waters threw;
Deep to its bed, with ooze and mud he spoil'd 951
The murmuring current, and its spring defil'd.
His limbs now moisten'd with a briny tide,
When strength no more his senseless wrath supply'd,
Prone on the turf he sunk, unnerv'd and spent, 955
All motionless, his looks on heav'n intent,
Stretch'd without food or sleep; while thrice the sun
Had stay'd, and thrice his daily course had run.
The fourth dire morn, with frantic rage possess'd,
He rends the armour from his back and breast: 960
Here lies the helmet, there the bossy shield,
Cuirasses and cuirasses further spread the field;
And all his other arms at random strow'd,
In divers parts he scatters through the wood;
Then from his body strips the covering vest, 965
And bares his sinewy limbs and hairy chest;
And now begins such feats of boundless rage,
As far and near th' astonish'd world engage.

His sword he left, else had his dreadful hand
 With blood and horror fill'd each wasted land: 970
 But little, pole-ax, sword, or mace he needs
 T' assist his strength, that every strength exceeds.
 First his huge grasp a lofty pine up-tears
 Sheer by the roots, alike another fares
 Of equal growth; as easy round him strow'd, 975
 As lowly weeds, or shrubs, or dwarfish wood.
 Vast oaks and elms before his fury fall;
 The stately fur, tough ash, and cedar tall.
 As when a fowler for the field prepares
 His sylvan warfare; ere he spreads his snares, 980
 From stubble, reeds, and furze, th' obstructed land
 Around he clears: no less Orlando's hand
 Levels the trees that long had tower'd above,
 For rolling years the glory of the grove!
 The rustic swains that mid the woodland shade 985
 Heard the loud crash, forsook their flocks that stray'd
 Without a shepherd, while their masters flew
 To learn the tumult and the wonder view.

Thus

Ver. 988. —*the wonder view*—] This Book concludes with
 one of the finest incidents in the poem, which gives name to
 the whole work, the madness of Orlando. The narrative begins
 at ver. 726. Few passages, in any author, excel the remaining
 par



—Published by Vernor & Hood, Dec. 1. 1798.

Thus far I've reach'd, but further to extend
The present story might, perchance, offend; 990
And rather would I here defer the rest,
Than with a tedious tale your ear molest.

part of the book ; and it is surely needless to point out to the Reader of taste and discernment the pathos and fire of the Poet, whether we contemplate his hero in the first dawn of his jealousy, or through the gradual progress of this passion, in which, while he seems to fly from conviction, he finds, by a train of concurrent circumstances, most artfully brought together, the truth forced upon him, till at length he breaks out into a frenzy, that closes the book with wonderful sublimity !

END OF THE TWENTY-THIRD BOOK.

THE
TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

M 4

THE ARGUMENT.

THE extravagant feats of Orlando in his madness. Zerbino and Isabella are met by Almonio and Corebo, who bring Odorico bound, to receive from Zerbino the punishment for his infidelity. Arrival of Gabrina, and the sentence passed on these two by Zerbino. Zerbino fights with Mandricardo in defence of Orlando's sword: issue of the combat. Meeting of Mandricardo and Rodomont: A dreadful battle between them for Doralis, till, on the appearance of a messenger from the Pagan camp, and at the request of Doralis, they agree to break off the combat, and go to the assistance of Agramant.

THE
TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

WHO'E'R his feet on Cupid's snares shall set,
Must seek t' escape, ere in th' ~~entangling~~
net

His wings are caught; for sage experience tells,
In love's extreme, extreme of madness dwells.
Though each may rage not with the wild excess 5
Orlando rag'd, their frenzy all express
By different ways—what more our folly shows,
Than while we others seek, ourselves to lose?
Various th' effects of this destructive flame,
The first dire cause of frenzy is the same: 10
Love is a forest, where the lover strays
From path to path, bewilder'd in the maze;

And

And he who leads his life in amorous pain,
Deserves to feel the gyves and shackling chain.
Here some may cry—Brother, thy words have
shown 15

Another's faults, forgetful of thy own.
Yes—in my intervals of sense I see
My bosom's conflict with the charge agree:
Yet have I striv'n, and hope in time to cure
The wounds I now from beauty's shafts endure. 20

I told, how from his limbs Orlando drew
Furious his arms, and o'er the forest threw
The scatter'd harness; how his vest he rent,
And to the ground his fatal falchion sent:
How trees he rooted, while the woods around 25
And cavern'd rocks re-echo'd to the sound:
Till rustic swains, to where the tumult spread,
Their grievous sins, or cruel planets led.
As nearer now the madman they beheld,
Whose feats of strength all human strength ex-
cell'd; 30
They turn'd to fly; but knew not where, nor whence,
Such sudden fears distracted every sense.

Swift

Swift he pursu'd, and one who vainly fled
 He seiz'd, and from the shoulders rent the head.

Easy,

Ver. 34. *He seiz'd, and from the shoulders, rent the head.*] Here the description of the extravagant and ludicrous feats performed by Orlando in his madness, which passages of our author, Cervantes seems to ridicule, when he represents Don Quixote in the fable mountain, debating whether he shall imitate the melancholy frenzy of Amadis de Gaul, or the more boisterous fury of Orlando.

“ Have I not told you,” said Don Quixote, “ that I design to imitate Amadis, acting here the desperado, the senseless, and the madman: at the same time copying the valiant Don Orlando, when he found, by the side of a fountain, some indications that Angelica the Fair had dishonoured herself with Medoro: at grief whereof he ran mad, tore up trees by the roots, disturbed the waters of the crystal springs, slew the shepherds, destroyed flocks, fired cottages, demolished houses, dragged mares on the ground, and did an hundred thousand other extravagancies, worthy to be recorded, and had in eternal remembrance. And supposing that I do not intend to imitate Roland, or Orlando, or Rotelando (for he had all these three names) in every point; and in all the mad things he acted, said, and thought, I will make a sketch of them the best I can, in what I judge the most essential. And, perhaps, I may satisfy myself with only copying Amadis, who, without playing any mischievous pranks, by weepings and tenderesses, arrived to as great a fame as the best of them all.”

JARVIS'S DON QUIXOTE, Vol. I. B. ii. C. ii.

Though much of the satire in the above citation must be allowed to be just, and though most of the actions recorded of Orlando in his
 madness

Easy, as from the stalk, or tender shoot, 35
 A peasant crops the flower, or plucks the fruit:
 The lifeless body by the legs he took,
 And, as a club, against his fellows shook.
 Two stretch'd on earth in lasting slumber lay,
 Perchance to rise not till the judgment day. 40
 The rest were soon dispers'd on every side,
 So well advis'd their rapid feet they ply'd;
 Nor had the madman loiter'd to pursue,
 But on their herds with headlong speed he flew.
 The labouring hinds the peril near survey'd, 45
 And left their ploughs, with all the rural trade
 Of scythes and spades, while seiz'd with pale af-
 fright
 One climbs a roof, and one the temple's height,
 (Since elms and oaks avail not) trembling there,
 They view the dreadful havock from afar. 50

madness may be given up to all the severity of criticism, yet no part
 of the description in the foregoing book, notwithstanding several of
 the circumstances are unfairly included in the ridicule of Cervantes,
 can be censured by any discerning reader; but let the whole of the
 passage be tried by the standard of truth and nature, and com-
 pared with whatever is excellent of the kind in ancient or modern
 poetry, and surely Ariosto will not lose by the comparison.

Before

Before his fury steeds and oxen yield,
And swift the courser that escapes the field.

Now might ye hear in every village rise
Tumultuous clamours, blending human cries
With rustic horns and pipes; while echo'd round 55
The pealing bells from neighbouring steeples found.

All seize such weapons as the time provides,
Bows, flings, and staves; and down the mountain's sides

A thousand rush; while from the dells below,
As many swarm against a single foe. 60

As when the tide appears the shore to lave,
The southern wind impelling wave on wave,
Scarce curls the first, the second deeper swells,
And this, the third with rising force excels;
Till more and more the victor-flood ascends, 65
And o'er the sands his liquid scourge extends.
Th' increasing throngs Orlando thus assail,
Pour down the hill, and issue from the vale.

Ten wretches first, then other ten he slew,
That near his hand in wild disorder drew. 70

None from his fated skin could draw the blood;
His skin unhurt each weapon's stroke withstood:

To

To him such wondrous grace the King of Heaven
To guard his faith and holy church had given.

Could aught of mortal risk Orlando's life, 75
Great were his risk in this unequal strife:

Then had he miss'd the mail he late unbrac'd,
And miss'd the falchion which aside he cast.

The crowds, that view'd each weapon aim'd in
vain,

With backward steps retreated from the plain; 80
When mad Orlando, who no further thought,
The rustic dwellings of a hamlet sought:

All thence were fled; yet there in plenteous store
He found such food as suits the village poor,
Of homely kind;—but prest with pining fast 85
On roots or bread his eager hands he cast;

Greedy alike devour'd whate'er he saw,
Or savoury viands bak'd, or morsels raw:

Then through the country round, with rapid pace,
To man and beast alike he gave the chase; 90

Through the deep covert of the tangled wood
The nimble goat or light-foot deer pursu'd.

Oft on the bear and tusky boar he flew,
And, with his single arm, in combat flew;

Then.

Then, with their flesh, his savage spoils of fight 95
 Infatiate gorg'd his ravenous appetite.

Thus o'er the realm of France, from land to land,
 He ran, till on a day a bridge he gain'd,
 Where swift (enclos'd in craggy banks and steep)
 A river pours its current broad and deep, 100
 And built beside a stately castle stands,
 That far around the subject fields commands.
 What there ensu'd some future time shall tell;
 Now turn to what Zerbino next befel.

Orlando gone, awhile Zerbino stood, 105
 Then took the path the Paladin pursu'd;
 Scarce past a mile, slow riding, when he spy'd
 A recreant knight with hands behind him ty'd,
 Plac'd on an humble steed, and for his guard,
 On either side a knight in arms prepar'd. 110
 Full soon Zerbino, as he nearer drew,
 Full soon the lovely Isabella knew
 False Odorico, trusted late to keep
 Her virgin charms, like wolves to watch the sheep.

Ver 104. *Now turn to what Zerbino, &c.*] Orlando appears again Book xxix. ver. 281. the last we heard of Zerbino was when he parted from Orlando, Book xxiii. ver. 723.

Him had the prince preferr'd o'er every friend, 115
From ill or shame his mistrefs to defend;
Nor could he think that faith, to him so prov'd,
Would fail to her, whom more than life he lov'd.

Then chanc'd fair Isabella to unfold
Her past escapes; and all the tale she told. 120
How, ere her vessel bulg'd beneath the wave,
She fought the bark her sinking life to save:
How Odorico had his faith betray'd;
And how the outlaws to their cave convey'd
Her helpless youth,—and scarce these words she
said,

When, lo! she saw the traitor prisoner led.

The two, who thither brought the faithless knight,
On Isabella cast their wondering sight,
As one they oft had seen; with her they guess'd
Their dearest lord, the partner of her breast, 130
Companion rode; for well his blazon'd shield
The colours of his noble line reveal'd.

Approaching near, they saw with raptur'd eyes
His well-known face confirm their first surmise.
Swift from their steeds they leapt, with eager pace,
And open arms, impatient to embrace 136

Zerbino's

Zerbino's knees: bareheaded now they stood
Before his sight, and lowly reverent bow'd.

Zerbino fix'd on each his earnest view,
And soon Corebo and Almonio knew; 140
Those well-try'd friends, to whom he gave the care
With Odorico to protect the fair.

Almonio then—Since Heaven has pleas'd once
more

To thee thy Isabella to restore,
Why should I now, my much-lov'd lord, relate, 145
What well thou know'st—why in this captive state
You caitiff rides—for she, the fair betray'd,
Has long ere this his treacherous guilt display'd;
Has told, how, by his base and guileful art
Deceiv'd, the wretch induc'd me to depart: 150
How brave Corebo, to defend her, stood,
And deeply wounded, shed his generous blood.

Attend the sequel—From the town in haste,
With steeds and menials to the strand I pass'd;
Still casting round my eager eyes, to find 155
The friends and virgin whom I left behind.

Ver. 151. *How brave Corebo, &c.*] See Book xiii. ver. 199.
from which part this narrative is continued by Almonio.

Foremost I spurr'd, and travers'd all the shore,
 Search'd every part their feet had trod before:
 In vain—no sign appear'd on either hand,
 But some new marks of footsteps on the sand. 160
 I follow'd these, and these my course convey'd
 Beneath the covert of the woodland shade:
 Led by the sound of arms, at length I found
 Unblest Corebo bleeding on the ground——
 Where is our virgin-charge I left so late? 165 }
 Where Odorico? say, what adverse fate
 Has here reduc'd thee to this wretched state?
 Thus I—and now the fatal truth reveal'd,
 I fought th' apostate wretch, the wretch conceal'd
 Deceiv'd my search, and, all the day beguil'd, 170
 Through wood and brake I wander'd in the wild;
 At length return'd to where a crimson tide
 From pale Corebo's wounds the herbage dy'd;
 Where (speedy help delay'd) the gloomy grave,
 Alone could take what art refus'd to save; 175
 Where friars and monks might funeral rites prepare,
 When vain the healing couch and leech's care.

Then from the woodland to the town I bore
 The fainting youth, his vigour to restore;

Where

Where soon our host a sage physician found, 180
With sovereign plants to close each bleeding wound.
Corebo cur'd, he took his arms and horse;
To find the wretch we bent our eager course;
Him in Alphonso's regal court I met,
And dar'd in open list, against him set 185
My trusty lance: the king allow'd the fight
With every legal form to prove the right.
My cause prevail'd; for Fortune, who at will
Oft conquest gives, dispensing good or ill,
So help'd my arms, his strength avail'd no more, 190
And he remain'd a captive in my power.
Th' offender's crime reveal'd, the monarch gave
To me his life, to punish or to save.
Nor would I free, nor take his forfeit head,
But thus to thee in captive chains have led, 195
That thy decree might doom him to be slain,
Or kept alive, reserv'd for further pain.
Fame spoke thee join'd with Charles' imperial force,
And hopes to find thee, hither urg'd our course.
All thanks to Heaven! that thus, when least I
thought 200
To see my prince my happy steps, has brought:

Nor less my thanks, that thus I see restor'd
 Thy Isabella to her plighted lord;
 Whom late the traitor, with insidious art,
 Had seem'd for ever from thy arms to part. 205

Zerbino silent, while Almonio spoke,
 On Odorico fix'd his earnest look:
 Hatred he little felt, but chief he mourn'd
 To find his hope from friendship thus return'd;
 To think that one, who least had cause to leave 210
 His prince and friend, should both alike deceive:

Ver. 208. *Hatred he little felt, &c.*] Zerbino is one of the most amiable characters in the whole work, and must strongly interest the reader. His sentiments of mercy and generosity, on the reflection of his friend's treachery and ingratitude, may remind us of the behaviour of Titus the Roman emperor to his friend Sextus, who had conspired against his life, so admirably painted by Metastasio, an author who abounds in the most noble and elevated sentiments. Titus, in his interview with Sextus, thus endeavours to make him confess his guilt.

Observe me, Sextus, we are now alone,
 Thy sovereign is not present: open then
 Thy heart to Titus; trust it with thy friend;
 I promise thee Augustus ne'er shall know
 The secret thou disclorest: tell me how
 Thy faith was first seduc'd: let us together
 Seek some pretence t' excuse thee: I, perchance,
 Shall be ev'n happier than thyself to find it.

ACT. iii. Scene viii.

Till,

Till, with a deep-drawn sigh, he rais'd his head,
And thus, benignant, to the prisoner said :
Declare, unhappy, nor the truth suppress;
And if we right have heard, thy guilt confess. 215
At this the faithless friend, low-bending, press'd
His knee to earth, and thus his lord address'd.

To err is still the lot of man below:
But hence the good, from wicked minds, we know ;
The last, by nature prone to every fault, 220
At once give way to evil's first assault.

The good for brave defence their weapons wield,
But, if the foe be strong, no less they yield.
Hadst thou, O prince ! consign'd to my command
Some frontier-post, and had my dastard hand 225
Without resistance given the hostile powers
To plant the standard on thy conquer'd towers ;
Then might the foulest curse pursue my name,
The traitor's danger and the coward's shame.
But, if compell'd to yield, not blame would meet, 230
But praise itself might follow such defeat.

'Twas mine to guard my faith from mental foes,
Like some strong fort which numerous troops en-
close.

With all the force supply'd me from above
By Heaven's supreme decree, full long I strove 235
To guard the fortrefs, till my vigour fail'd,
And the strong foe with stronger arms prevail'd.

Thus Odorico spoke; and more he said
To prove what mighty power his faith betray'd;
With every art of soothing speech address'd, 240
He sought to move his injur'd prince's breast:
While good Zerbino stood in deep suspense,
Or to forgive, or punish such offence.

Thoughts of the heavy crime now seem'd to wake
His steeping wrath, the traitor's life to take: 245
Now dear remembrance of their friendship past,
Which, till that fatal chance, so firm could last,
With pity's stream resentment's flame suppress'd,
And nourish'd mercy in his generous breast.

While, unresolv'd, Zerbino still remains 250
To free th' offender, or to hold in chains;
By death to sweep him from his sight, or give
The wretch in lengthen'd sufferings yet to live,
Behold, loud neighing, comes th' affrighted steed,
Which Mandricardo from his bridle freed, 255

Ver. 254. *Behold, loud neighing, &c.*] See Book xxiii. ver. 673.
where Mandricardo takes away Gabrina's bridle.

And with him bears the beldame pale for breath,
Whole guile had nearly wrought Zerbino's death.
The roving palfrey, from a distant ground
The courser hears, and seeks the kindred sound.
Soon as Zerbino thither turns his eyes; 260
He lifts his hands in praises to the skies,
For two so wicked to his power resign'd,
Whose deeds deserv'd his deepest hate to find.

The noble knight that impious crone detains:
And now he ponders with himself what pains 265
Her crimes should meet; to lop her nose and ears,
To make her piece-meal die, at first appears
A just decree; to give her limbs for food
To gorge the hungry vultures' screaming brood.
Now this, now that, his wavering thoughts revolve;
At length determin'd, fix his last resolve: 271
Then, turning to his friends, he cries—I give
My free consent the faithless youth shall live.
Though such offence may scarce forgiveness gain,
At least it merits not severest pain. 275
Still let him live, and freed, my mercy prove,
Since well I know his crime the crime of love.
Love has ere this a firmer bosom brought
To guilt more deep than Odorico's fault,

Which now we judge—to him let grace be shown 280
The suffering should be mine, and mine alone.
Blind as I was, so vast a trust to yield,
Yet knew how flame can catch the stubble field!
To Odorico then—Be this thy doom,
The penance of thy deed—thy task to come; 285
One circling year this woman's steps attend,
From all that seek her life, her life defend;
Her foes be thine—and range, at her command,
The realms of spacious France, from land to land.

Zerbino thus: and him, who for his crime 290
Deserv'd his death, he gave some future time
To certain fate; expos'd in every shape
To perils human wit could ne'er escape.
So oft some ill-starr'd knight, or wife, or maid,
Her arts had ruin'd, and her guile betray'd; 295
Who'er her safety watches, risks his life
With wandering knights in many a dangerous strife.

Thus each was justly punish'd—she for crimes
That long for vengeance cry'd in former times,
While he, for her defence who wrongly stood, 300
In some stern fight must shed his vital blood.
A solemn oath Zerbino fram'd to bind
The recreant knight to keep the terms enjoin'd;

And

And vow'd, if e'er he broke the faith he swore,
And fell again the captive of his power, 305
No longer prayer or mercy to regard,
But with his death his perjury reward.

Then to Almonio and his friend he made
A sign to free their prisoner; these obey'd
With slow reluctance; either griev'd to find 310
Himself defrauded of revenge design'd.

And now the faithless knight the place forfook,
And with him thence that aged beldame took.
What chanc'd to these, no further Turpin writes,
But thus another bard the tale recites: 315

The bard(his name untold) has thus declar'd:
Ere these together one day's journey far'd,
False Odorico, deaf to every call
Of plighted faith, to free himself from thrall,
Around Gabrina's neck a halter flung, 320
And to an elm the crone detested hung;
And thence a twelvemonth (but unknown the place)
Almonio made him run the self-same race.

Zerbino, who the Paladin pursues
With earnest search, and fears the track to lose, 325
Now sends a message to his martial train,
Anxious what cause could thus their lord detain.

To

To good Almonio he his charge declares,
 Which now to tell, the muse for haste forbears.
 To good Almonio is Corebo join'd, 330
 And Isabella sole remains behind.
 Great was the love Zerbino had profess'd,
 And great in Isabella's tender breast
 For brave Orlando; great was either's zeal
 To learn what chance the virtuous earl beset, 335
 So late unhors'd: three days to' await the knight*,
 Whose fearless arm rejects the sword in fight,
 The earl had vow'd; and hence till thrice the day
 Had rose and set, the prince decreed to stay,
 And to the squadrons his return delay. 340

In every place through which Orlando pass'd,
 His hapless way Zerbino following trac'd:
 At length he came, where midst the lonely grove,
 The fair ingrate had carv'd the notes of love.
 The spring disturb'd; the trees, and cave he view'd;
 Those lopt and rooted, this in fragments hew'd. 346
 Not far he saw a sudden gleam and light,
 And first the warrior-cuirass struck his sight:
 The helmet next—not that which fam'd of yore,
 The haughty African, Almontes wore. 350

* MANDRICARDO.

He heard a courser in the woods conceal'd
Repeated neigh, and now advanc'd, beheld
Where Brigliadoro graz'd the verdant plain,
While from his saddle hung the loosen'd rein.

He Durindana fought, and soon he found 355

The sword, unsheath'd, lie uselefs on the ground.

He saw the furcoat, which in pieces strow'd,

The wretched earl had scatter'd through the wood.

With Isabella now Zerbino gaz'd

In sad suspense, while every object rais'd 360

A secret fear, yet little they divin'd

(Howe'er they weigh'd the signs with anxious
mind)

Orlando from his better sense disjoin'd.

One drop of blood discover'd on the plain

Had imag'd to their thoughts the champion slain.

And now a rustic hind with headlong pace 366

Approach'd, deep terror on his bloodless face,

Who late in safety from a rock's tall height,

Beheld the wretched madman's frantic might;

How from his limbs he drew his vest and arms, 370

And shepherds flew, and wrought a thousand harms.

He certain tidings to Zerbino gives,

Who, fill'd with wonder, scarce the truth believes,

Though

Though clear the proofs—the shepherd's tale he
hears

With pitying heart, and leaves his seat in tears. 375

He lights to gather from the woodland ground

The warlike relicks widely scatter'd round.

With him the gentle fair her steed forsakes,

And from the ground the arms and vestment takes;

When, lo! appears a dame in looks distrest, 380

Sighs frequent bursting from her mournful breast:

If any ask who thus her woes deplor'd,

'Twas Flordelis, who rov'd to seek her lord;

For Brandimart, departing thence unknown,

Had left the fair in Paris' regal town; 385

Where seven or eight long moons the mourner
stay'd;

But when she found his wish'd return delay'd,

From sea to sea she pass'd, from plain to plain,

Far as the hills that sever France from Spain;

All parts she search'd, but where estrang'd from
home 390

He liv'd in old Atlantes' magic dome;

* Ver. 383. '*Twas Flordelis, &c.*] In the viiith Book, ver. 604. Flordelis is mentioned to have left Paris in search of her husband Brandimart, who was gone after Orlando.

Where, with Rogero Brandimart detain'd,
Where, with Orlando stern Ferrau remain'd.
But when Astolpho, with his wondrous blast,
Had driv'n the forc'er from his seats aghast, 395
To Paris Brandimart again return'd,
Unknown to her, who still his absence mourn'd.
Thus lovely Flordelis, to chance resign'd,
Zerbino and his Isabella join'd:

Too well she Brigliadoro knew, who stray'd 400
Without his lord, and, ah! with grief survey'd
Each cruel object, while she heard relate
The dreadful sequel of Orlando's fate,
Who rov'd, of sense distraught, from place to place,
A wretched outcast of the human race. 405

Zerbino now the arms together drew,
And fix'd them on a pine in open view,
A trophy fair! and, lest some 'venturous knight
(Native or stranger born) on these should light,
The verdant rind this short inscription bore: 410

THESE ARMS THE PALADIN ORLANDO WORE.
As if he said—Let none these arms remove,
But such as dare Orlando's fury prove.

This pious task perform'd, the prince with speed
Prepar'd to part; but, ere he rein'd his steed, 415

Fierce

Fierce Mandricardo came, who, when he turn'd
 And saw the trunk with those rich spoils adorn'd,
 He ask'd from whence, and who such arms dispos'd,
 To whom Zerbino, all he knew, disclos'd,
 The Pagan king o'erjoy'd, no longer stay'd, 420
 Approach'd the pine, then seiz'd the sword, and said.

Let rashly none presume my deed to blame,
 This fatal blade by law of arms I claim:
 Long, long ere now this gallant sword was won,
 And still, where'er I find, I claim my own. 425

Orlando, fearing to defend his right,
 Has feign'd his madness but to shun the fight:
 Then wherefore should I now forbear to take
 What coward baseness urg'd him to forsake?

Rash knight, refrain—nor think (Zerbino cries)
 Without dispute, to snatch the glorious prize. 431
 If such thy claim to Hector's arms, then know
 'Twas theft, not valour, did those arms bestow.

Ver. 416. *Fierce Mandricardo—*] See Book xxiii. ver. 690.
 where Mandricardo is last mentioned.

Ver. 424. *Long, long ere this the gallant sword was won,—*
 Mandricardo seems to mean that he had proved his title to the sword,
 by the perilous adventure which he encountered at the castle of the
 Syrian Fairy, where he conquered the armour of Hector. The
 story is told at large in the note to Book xiv. ver. 240.

No more was said; for each with equal heat,
 And equal courage, springs his foe to meet. 435
 Scarce is the fight begun, when echo'd round
 A hundred blows their polish'd arms resound.
 Where Durindana threatens from on high,
 Zerbino seems a rapid flame to fly
 The falling stroke, whene'er to shun the steel 440
 Light as a deer he makes his courser wheel.
 Behoves him now his utmost skill t' employ,
 Since, from that edge, accusom'd to destroy,
 One wound might fend him to the dreary grove,
 Where love-lorn ghosts through shades of myrtle
 rove. 445

As singled from the herd, the nimble hound
 Invades the boar, and cautious circling round,
 Shifts every side, but still maintains the field,
 By turns assaulting, and by turns repell'd.

Ver. 445. ——— *shades of myrtle*—] Virgil in his sixth *Æneid*
 tells us, that the ghosts of departed lovers were thus disposed of.

Hic, quæ durus amor crudeli tabe peredit,
 Secreti celant calles, et myrtea circum
 Silva tegit. ———

The souls, whom that unhappy flame invades,
 In secret solitude and myrtle shades
 Make endless moan. ———

DRYDEN.

So

So brave Zerbino, as the sword descends, 450
Or threats aloft, with wariest heed attends ;
Honour and life to guard, his sharpen'd eyes
Watch every stroke, and as he strikes he flies.
Thus he; while fiercely as the Pagan foe 454
Whirls his dread sword, and gives or fails the blow,
He seems a whirlwind that from Heaven descends,
And 'twixt two Alpine hills the forest rends ;
Now, bent to earth, the trees deep groaning bears,
Now from the trunks the shatter'd branches tears.
Though oft Zerbino turn'd aside, or fled 460
The trenchant blade, at length the Pagan sped
A downward stroke, that with full force imprest
Between the sword and buckler, reach'd his breast.
Strong was the corset, strong the plated mail,
With texture firm; yet all could nought avail 465
Against the blade, that thundering from above,
Through plate and mail, and shatter'd corset drove.
The sword fell short, else had the stroke design'd
Cleft all the knight, yet reach'd so far to find 469
The naked part, whence from the shallow wound, }
A span in length, the warm blood trickling round }
Stray'd o'er his shining arms, and stain'd the }
ground. }

So have I seen a filken floweret spread,
And dye the silver vest with blushing red,
Wrought by her snowy hand with matchless art, 475
That hand, whose whiteness oft has pierc'd my heart:
Ah! what avails the good Zerbino now
Courage to dare, or strength to urge the blow,
Though master of the war?—Here virtue fail'd,
Where stronger arms and stronger nerve prevail'd. 480
Slight was the wound, though by the crimson hue
Not slight it seem'd, but, startled at the view,
Pale Isabella's heart, with fear oppress'd,
All cold and trembling, sunk within her breast.
Zerbino, fir'd with generous thirst of fame, 485
With deep resentment stung, and conscious shame,
Rais'd both his hands, and with redoubled might,
Struck on the helmet of the Tartar knight.
The staggering Saracen the weight confess'd,
And to the saddle bow'd his haughty crest: 490
Th' enchanted casque made every weapon vain,
Else that dire stroke had cleft him to the brain.
Impatient for revenge, the Pagan lord
Against Zerbino's helmet rais'd the sword.
Zerbino, who the foe's intent beheld, 495
Swift to the right his well-taught courser wheel'd;

Yet not so swift, nor could he shun so well
The biting edge, which on his buckler fell,
But through the plates from side to side it went,
And deep beneath his mailed gauntlet rent; 500
Laid bare his arm, then glancing downward found
His steel-clad thigh, and deep impress'd a wound.
Now here, now there, Zerbino strikes in vain;
The foe's tough arms, unhurt, the stroke sustain:
Each pass he tries; no pass the plates afford, 505
And harmless from the surface bounds the sword.
Not so the Tartar king—his fiercer might
With such advantage urg'd th' unequal fight;
Seven times his steel has drunk Zerbino's blood,
Has pierc'd or cleft his shield, his helmet hew'd. 510
By slow degrees life's issuing current drains
His ebbing strength, but dauntless he remains:
His vigorous heart, still nourish'd with the flame
Of inbred worth, supports his feeble frame.
Sad Isabella, now with fears distress'd, 515
To Doralis her earnest suit address'd;
By every power adjur'd her to suppress
The battle's rage, and turn their strife to peace.
Courteous as fair, and doubting yet th' event
Of combat, Doralis with glad consent 520

To

To Isabella yielding, soon inclin'd
 To friendly truce her valiant lover's mind.
 Not less Zerbino calm'd his vengeful heart
 For her he lov'd, consenting to depart
 Where'er she led, and, at her powerful word, 525
 Unfinish'd left th' adventure of the sword.

But Flordelis, who ill-defended view'd
 Unblest Orlando's falchion, weeping stood
 To wail the loss; and oft she wish'd that fate
 Had brought her lord to share the dire debate. 530
 Yet could she e'er (if chance so fair beset)
 To her lov'd Brandimart the story tell;
 Stern Mandricardo, to his deadly cost,
 Might rue that conquest now his haughty boast.

From morn till evening Flordelis in vain 535
 Still fought her lord, from morn till eve again
 At random stray'd, while he, whose loss she mourn'd,
 Once more to Paris' regal walls return'd.
 So long she travers'd mountain, hill, and wood,
 At length she came, where near a running flood 540

Ver. 535. *From morn till evening, Flordelis, &c.*] Here it seems that Flordelis departs without accosting Zerbino and Isabella, to whom she appears a stranger.

The wretched Paladin she saw and knew——

But let us now Zerbino's tale pursue.

Though scarce the noble youth his feat maintains,
So fast his blood has flow'd, so fast it drains,

Yet, self-accus'd, affliction rends his mind, 545

For Durindana to the foe resign'd :

His pains increase—and soon with shortening breath,
He feels the certain chill approach of death.

Th' enfeebled warrior now his courser stays,

And near a fountain's side his limbs he lays. 550

Ah! what avails the wretched virgin's grief?

What can she here to yield her lord relief?

In desert wilds for want she sees him die,

No friend to help, no peopled dwelling nigh,

Where she, for pity or reward, might find 555

Some skilful leech, his streaming wounds to bind.

In vain she weeps—in vain with frantic cries

She calls on Fortune, and condemns the skies.

Why was I not in surging waters lost,

When first my vessel left Galicia's coast? 560

Ver. 542. *But let us now Zerbino's tale pursue—*] He returns to Flordelis, Book xxix. ver. 297. and to Mandricardo in the 689th verse of this book.

Zerbino.

Zerbino, as his dying eyes he turn'd
On her, while thus her cruel fate she mourn'd,
More felt her sorrows, than the painful strife
Of nature struggling on the verge of life.

My heart's sole treasure! may'st thou still (he
said)

565

When I, alas! am number'd with the dead,
Preserve my love—think not for death I grieve;
But thee, thus guideless and forlorn I leave,
Weighs heavy here—O! were my mortal date
Prolong'd to see thee in a happier state, 570
Blest were this awful hour—content in death,
On that lov'd bosom to resign my breath.
But summon'd now at Fate's unpitying call,
Unknown what future lot to thee may fall—
By those soft lips, by those fond eyes I swear, 575
By those dear locks that could my heart ensnare!
Despairing to the shades of night I go,
Where thoughts of thee, left to a world of woe,
Shall rend this faithful breast with deeper pains
Than all that hell's avenging realm contains. 580

Ver. 580. —*hell's avenging realm*—] We must always remember that the Italian poets, without scruple, make use of the old Pagan mythology.

At this, sad Isabella pour'd a shower
Of trickling tears, and lowly bending o'er,
Close to his mouth her trembling lips she laid,
His mouth now pale like some fair rose decay'd;
A vernal rose, that, cropt before the time, 585
Bends the green stalk, and withers ere its prime.

Think not (she said), life of my breaking heart!
Without thy Isabella to depart:
Let no such fears thy dying bosom rend:
Where'er thou go'st, my spirit shall attend: 590
One hour to both shall like dismissal give,
Shall fix our doom, in future worlds to live,
And part no more—when ruthless death shall close
Thy fading eyes—that moment ends my woes!
Or should I still survive that stroke of grief, 595
At least thy sword will yield a sure relief.
And, ah! I trust, reliev'd from mortal state,
Each breathless corse shall meet a milder fate,
When some, in pity of our hapless doom,
May close our bodies in one peaceful tomb. 600

Thus she; and while his throbbing pulse she feels
Weak, and more weak, as death relentless steals
Each vital sense, with her sad lip she drains
The last faint breath of life that yet remains.

To

To raise his feeble voice, Zerbino try'd— 605
 I charge thee now—O ! lov'd in death (he cry'd)
 By that affection which thy bosom bore,
 When, for my sake, thou left'st thy father's shore,
 And, if a truth like mine such power can give,
 While Heaven shall please—I now command thee,
 live. 610

But never be it from thy thought remov'd,
 That, much as man can love, Zerbino lov'd.
 Fear not but God, in time, will succour lend,
 From every ill thy virtue to defend;
 As once he sent the Roman knight to save 615
 Thy youth unfriended from the robbers cave:
 As from the seas he drew thee safe to land,
 And snatch'd thee from th' impure Biscayner's hand:
 And when at last all other hopes we lose,
 Be death the last sad refuge that we chuse. 620

Thus spoke the dying knight; but scarce were heard
 His latter words in accents weak preferr'd.
 Here ended life—the light so drooping dies,
 When oil or wax no more the flame supplies.

Ver. 623. *Here ended life—*] The death of Zerbino, with all the attendant circumstances, is one of those fine passages so admired by the Italians, and which, if the translator has done any justice to his author, cannot fail strongly to affect the English reader.

What tongue can tell how mourn'd the wretched
maid, 625

What plaints she utter'd, and what tears she shed,
When in her arms her dear Zerbino lay,
All icy cold, a lump of lifeless clay!
Prone on the bleeding corse herself she threw,
Clasp'd his stiff limbs, and bath'd with tender
dew: 630

She rav'd so loud, that all the plains around,
And woods, re-echo'd the distressful sound:
Nor her white breast, nor blooming cheeks she
spares,

But cruel that she strikes, and these she tears;
She rends her golden locks, that know not blame, 635
Invoking, vainly, oft the much lov'd name;
And, little mindful of Zerbino's charge,
His sword had set her frantic soul at large,
But, lo! a hermit, wont each stated day,
To the clear fount to bend his lonely way, 640
Came from his neighbouring dwelling, timely sent
By Heaven's high will t' oppose her dire intent.
This reverend man, in whom at once were join'd
A sage experience and a gentle mind,

Whose

Whose hallow'd wisdom all examples knew, 645
And brought, as in a mirror, these to view ;
Now, with a pious healing hand, address'd
The balm of patience to her wounded breast,
And many a woman bright in virtue nam'd,
In either volume's* sacred text proclaim'd. 650
He show'd how vain our search of bliss is spent,
When God alone can yield us true content ;
That earth's enjoyments, ever shifting, leave
The wish unfated, and the hope deceive.
He wrought so far, with mild persuasion's breath, 655
To change her heart so lately fix'd on death,
And raise her wish to quit this vale of strife,
And dedicate to God her future life.
Yet would she never banish from her mind
Zerbino's love, or leave his corse behind, 660
Resolv'd through all her pilgrimage to bear
With her the relicks of a form so dear.

Then, by the hermit's aid, who show'd in age
A strength of limb his years could ill presage,
Zerbino on his pensive steed she laid, 565
And travers'd many a mile the woodland shade.

The cautious hermit led not to his cell,
 The lovely maid, with him alone to dwell,
 Where stood his mansion in the neighbouring dell. }
 His thoughts suggest—that hand we justly blame 670
 Which bears at once the fuel and the flame,
 Nor would in prudence or in years confide,
 By such a proof to find his virtue try'd ;
 But meant to lead her to Provence, where stood,
 Near fam'd Marseilles, a holy house, endow'd 675
 With wealthy gifts, whose spacious walls contain'd,
 Of heaven-devoted dames, a saint-like band.
 Awhile their steps a friendly castle stay'd,
 Where, in a fable coffin clos'd, they laid 679 }
 The slaughter'd knight, and safely thence convey'd.

Ver. 667. *The cautious hermit—*] So light a turn given to the narrative, after so beautiful and affecting a catastrophe, will, I fear, disgust the reader ; but, at the same time, as it strongly marks the general complexion of the early Italian poets of this class, and more especially the genius of Ariosto, it was not thought allowable to omit the passage. These are among the parts alluded to by Gravina, who accuses Ariosto of “ sometimes mingling ludicrous reflections or allusions with serious matter.” See the Preface.

Ver. 680. ——— *thence convey'd—*] In the time of Ariosto, Joan, queen of Castile, in like manner carried with her, in a coffin, the body of her dead husband, Philip of Austria.

ZATTA.

A spa-

A spacious tract of land, day following day,
 Through the lone wild and least frequented way,
 They strove to pass unknown, secure from harms,
 Now all the country round was fill'd with arms.
 At length a knight they met, who stopp'd their
 course 685

With brutal insult and unmanly force :
 Of him some fitter time the muse shall tell,
 Now turn to what the Tartar king befel.

The battle ended thus, his generous steed
 The warrior from the reins and saddle freed, 690 }
 And turn'd him loose to graze the flowery mead.
 Pleas'd with the fair retreat, his limbs he laid
 Beside the stream beneath the cooling shade ;
 But lay not long, ere from a distant height
 Descending to the plain, appear'd a knight : 695
 Him, soon as Doralis beheld, she knew,
 And pointing out to Mandricardo's view,
 Unless the distant sight deceive my eyes,
 Lo ! yonder comes fierce Rodomont (she cries).
 To give thee combat from the hill he speeds, 700
 And well such combat now thy prowess needs ;

Ver. 688. *Now turn to what the Tartar king befel.*] He returns to Isabella and the hermit, Book xxviii. ver. 676.

Rage for my loss, affianc'd to his bed,
Has drawn down all his vengeance on thy head.

As the bold hawk^a a fiercer mien assumes,
Lifts his high head, and spreads his ruffled plumes,
If chance some birds of household breed he spies 706
(The starling, duck, or dove) before him rise:
So Mandricardo, well assur'd to bear
From Rodomont the bloody wreaths of war,
With joy exulting, mounts his steed again, 710
His feet the stirrups press, his hand the rein.

And now the wrathful chiefs approach'd so near,
That each the other's threatening words might hear.
The king of Algiers shook his haughty head,
Wav'd his right arm, and thus aloud he said: 715
Soon shall I make thee rue thy fatal joy,
Who for a short-liv'd gift, and amorous toy,
Hast dar'd t' insult a prince, whose powerful hand
Shall wreak the vengeance that such wrongs demand.
Then Mandricardo thus:—In vain he tries 720
To shake my courage who with threats defies.
Women and boys are scar'd with seeming harms,
Or those that ne'er were bred to use of arms:
Not such am I—whose soul no terror knows,
The hour of combat is to me repose: 725

On

On foot, on horse, disarm'd, or arm'd, I dare,
In the close list, or open field of war.

Rage follows rage, and threatenings threatenings
breed ;

Their swords are drawn, and thundering strokes suc-
ceed.

Like winds that first but whisper through the brake,
Next the high tops of elms or beeches shake ; 731

Then whirl the gathering dust aloft in air,

Sweep cots away, and lay the forest bare ;

In tempests kill the flocks that graze the plain,

And whelm the vessels in the howling main. 735

These Pagan knights, whose like could ne'er be found
Through all the realms for deeds of arms renown'd,

Ver. 727. — *In the close list, or open fields of war.*] This speech of Mandricardo is in the spirit of Hector to Ajax, before the single combat between them. Ajax had defied him with haughtiness, to which he replies:

Me, as a boy or woman would'st thou fright,

New to the field, and trembling at the fight?

Thou meet'st a chief deserving of thy arms,

To combat born, and bred amidst alarms:

I know to shift my ground, remount the car,

Turn, charge, and answer every call of war ;

To right, to left, the dextrous lance to wield,

And bear thick battle on my sounding shield.

POPE'S Iliad, Book vii. ver. 285.

With

With dauntless hearts and many a dreadful stroke,
Pursu'd a fight that well their race bespoke.
With horrid clangor oft their falchions meet; 740
Earth seems to groan and shake beneath their feet;
While, from their batter'd armour, frequent fly
The fiery sparks, ascending to the sky.
On either side alike the knights assail
The plates to sever, or to rend the mail. 745
Each inch of ground they guard with equal care,
And in a narrow orb contract the war.
Amidst a thousand aim'd, the Tartar bends
A stroke, that driv'n with both his hands, descends
On Sarza's front—the many-colour'd light 750
Now skims in mist before his dazzled sight.
Back fell the African, of sense bereav'd,
The crupper of his steed his helm receiv'd;
He lost his stirrups, and his seat had lost,
Ev'n in her fight whose love he valu'd most; 755
But as a bow of temper'd steel, constrain'd
To yield reluctant to a potent hand,
The more it bends, the stronger, when releas'd,
It springs, and sends the shaft with strength in-
creas'd:

Again

Again the Pagan rising from the blow, 760
Return'd redoubled vengeance on his foe.
Where late himself the hostile weapon felt,
Stern Rodomont on Mandricardo dealt
The furious blade; the blade no entrance found;
The Trojan casque secur'd the knight from wound;
But scarce the Tartar, with the blow bereav'd 766
Of sight and sense, the day from night perceiv'd.

While Rodomont repeated strokes bestow'd,
And on his helmet laid the furious load;
The Tartar's courser, that beheld with fear 770
The hostile steel which hiss'd aloft in air,
With his own fate his rider's safety bought:
For while to shun the fearful noise he fought,
Full on his neck descends the weighty sword,
And gives to him the wound design'd his lord: 775
He wanted Hector's helm his head to shield,
And hence he fell—but instant from the field
Rais'd on his feet, again with fearless look
Bold Mandricardo Durindana shook:
Rage swell'd his breast to view his courser slain; 780
While Rodomont on him with loosen'd rein
Impell'd his steed; but Mandricardo stood,
Firm as some rock amidst the billowy flood;

While,

While, with his lord o'erthrown, extended low
Was laid the courser of the Sarzan foe. 785
Sudden the king of Algiers left his steed:
His feet as swiftly from the stirrups freed,
And stood recover'd with the foe to wage
An equal fight; no less the Tartar's rage
His rival met——Now blows succeeding blows, 790
Fierce and more fierce the burning combat grows.
But, lo! an envoy came from Afric's bands,
With numbers more dispatch'd thro Gallia's lands,
Back to their banners every chief to call,
And private knight, when need requir'd them all:
For he*, whose arms the golden lily bore, 796
Had in their works besieg'd the Pagan power;
And did not speedy aid retrieve their fame,
Destruction soon must overwhelm the Moorish name.
The trusty herald, as he nearer drew, 800
By arms and vestment well the warriors knew;
But more he knew them by their force in field,
And weapons, which like theirs, no hands could
wield.
He dares not rush between their wrathful swords,
And trust the privilege his name affords: 805

* CHARLES.

To

To Doralis he hastens first to tell
What deep mischance the Saracens befel;
How Agramant, Marfilius, and their train,
With Stordilano join'd, a siege sustain
From Christian Charles; and will'd her to relate 810
To either combatant their sovereign's state.

He said—the damsel with undaunted breast
Between them stept, and in these words address'd.

I charge ye, by the love which well I know
To me ye bear, your swords your courage show 815
T' assert a nobler cause—be now display'd
Your mutual worth our friendly camp to aid;
Where the brave Saracens besieg'd, await
Your saving arm, or some disastrous fate.

The herald then his embassy reveal'd, 820
And letters gave to Ulien's offspring*, seal'd
From king Troyano's son; when either knight
Agreed to calm his wrath, and stay the fight;
And fix the truce, till some propitious hour
Should raise the siege, and free the suffering Moor.
The siege once rais'd, no longer either breast 826
Shall let revenge, or rival hatred rest,

* RODOMONT.

But rage anew, till, mutual valour try'd,
Their fatal title to the dame decide.

Thus they; and she to whom their faith they
vow'd, 830

The sacred pledge for either warrior stood.
But Discord stern, whose unrelenting mind
Abhor'd all treaties that to peace inclin'd,
And Pride no less, the friendly terms oppos'd
That thus in hated league their anger clos'd. 835
But these in vain, with force combin'd, assail'd,
Where Love's resistless power o'er all prevail'd:
He bent his bow, his arrows swiftly flew,
Till Pride and Discord from the field withdrew:
The truce confirm'd by her whose fovereign sway 840
Compell'd each hardy champion to obey.
One warlike steed they miss'd, for in the fight
Lay dead the courser of the Tartar knight;
When thither gallant Brigiadaro stray'd,
Who cropt, beside the stream, the verdant glade. 845
Since here the book concludes, permit me here
To pause, and for a while the tale defer.

END OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK.

THE
TWENTY-FIFTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

ROGERO goes, with the damsel, to deliver the youth who was condemned to die. Tale of Richardetto and Floridespina. Rogero and Richardetto arrive at the castle of Agrismont, where they are entertained by Aldiger of the house of Clarmont. Aldiger gives Richardetto unwelcome tidings of their kinsmen Malagigi and Vivian, who were prisoners to Lanfusa, the mother of Ferrau. Rogero engages to set them at liberty. Rogero's letter to Bradamant to excuse his absence. Rogero, Richardetto, and Aldiger, set out next day to rescue Malagigi and Vivian from the hands of the Pagans.

THE
TWENTY-FIFTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE thirst of honour and the force of love
Eternal strife in youthful bosoms move:
Nor yet is known which most inclines the scales,
Since this or that alike in turn prevails.
The call of glory and the sense of right, 5
Not little now can weigh with either knight
To stay the combat, for the damsel fought,
Till succour to the Moorish camp was brought?
But love more weigh'd—and had not her commands
(Whose power was sovereign) held their wrathful
hands, 10
Ne'er had the battle ceas'd, till one subdu'd
Had stain'd his rival's wreaths with vital blood;

And Agramant, with all his social train,
 Had hop'd assistance from their arms in vain.
 Condemn not Love—if oft he merits blame, 15
 His generous influence oft our praise may claim.

All thoughts of contest o'er, the warlike pair
 Tow'rd's Paris' walls, with her, the gentle fair,
 Direct their steeds: the dwarf attends their course,
 The dwarf who led, to meet his rival's force, 20
 The jealous Rodomont, nor ceas'd to trace
 The Tartar, till he brought them face to face.
 A meadow entering now, at ease they find
 Four knights beside a crystal fount reclin'd.
 Two all unarm'd; two wear their helmets lac'd; 25
 And by their side a beauteous dame is plac'd.
 But who the knights and dame, some future time
 Shall tell—Rogero first demands my rhyme:
 Rogero who, but late the tale has shown,
 In the deep well his magic shield had thrown. 30

Scarce from the well a mile Rogero pass'd,
 When, lo! an envoy came; (of those in haste,
 Dispatch'd by king Troyano's son, to claim
 His champions to retrieve the Pagan name)

Ver. 27. *But who the knights and dame, &c.*] He returns to these Book xxvi. ver. 498.

Ver. 30. *In the deep well—*] See Book xxii. ver. 663.

From him he heard the camp's disastrous state, 35
Where now the powers, besieg'd by Charles, await }
(Unless reliev'd) the last distress of fate.

At this, conflicting thoughts Rogero press'd,
And rent at once his undetermin'd breast
With different calls—nor which t' attend he knows, 40
Scarce time or place to weigh their choice allows.

At length the herald he dismiss'd, and sped
His course to follow where the damsel led,
Who urg'd him on, till with the setting sun

They reach'd a city by Marfilius won 45

From royal Charles, where still his arms maintain'd,
Amidst the heart of France, his conquest gain'd.

No bridge, nor portal here their haste delay'd :

None clos'd the portal, nor their passage stay'd ;

Though near the fosse and gate was seen to stand 50

(To guard the place) an arm'd and numerous band.

The maid, his fair conductress, well they knew,

And hence, unquestion'd, let the knight pursue

His purpos'd way, till to the square he came,

And saw the thronging crowd and kindled flame, 55

Where stood the youth, who seem'd prepar'd to wait,

With downcast looks, his near-approaching fate.



But when, by chance, he rais'd his mournful eyes
Suffus'd in tears, Rogero, with surprize,
Believ'd in him his Bradamant he view'd; 60
So much the youth a kindred likeness shew'd:
Still as he gaz'd, and gaz'd with nearer look,
The mien and features Bradamant bespoke:
Or this (he cries) is she, or I no more
Am that Rogero I was call'd before. 65

Through too much zeal to give th' unhappy aid,
She hither came, and here, by fate betray'd,
A prisoner stands—Why did thy haste, my fair,
Forbid thy knight th' adventurous deed to share?
Yet, thanks to Heaven! that favour'd thus I come,
With timely succour to reverse thy doom. 71

His sword unsheathing with a furious look,
(His spear on Pinabello's knights he broke)
Against the throngs unarm'd his steed he guides,
O'er many a body, prest to earth, he rides. 75
With cries the wretches fly, and all the train
(So numerous late) are chac'd, or maim'd, or slain.
As when, beside a pool, the household breed
Of smaller birds in flocks securely feed;
If chance a hawk, descending from the skies, 80
Amidst them strikes, and makes his single prize;
Each

Each quits his fellow, for himself provides,
 And from his feather'd foe for safety hides :
 So had you seen dispers'd the heartless crew,
 When first Rogero on their numbers flew : 85
 From four or six that thence too slowly fled,
 At one fierce stroke Rogero lopt the head :
 Cleft to the breast through some his steel he sent ;
 There, through the skull ; here, to the teeth it went.
 What though no ponderous helms their heads enclose,
 But lighter morions bind each wretch's brows, 91
 Yet, were they arm'd at proof, his raging blade
 Through temper'd helmet had the passage made.
 Rogero's strength, was not the strength we find
 In modern knights, or their degenerate kind : 95
 Not such the tusky boar or lion boasts,
 The fiercest beast of our's, or foreign coasts :
 Perchance the thunder may his force excel,
 Or that dire fiend (not he that reigns in hell)
 But that which, arm'd with fire, my lord employs, 100
 Which drives through seas and skies, and all destroys.

Ver. 99. *Or that dire fiend (not he that reigns in hell)*

But that which, arm'd with fire, my lord employs,] By these lines the poet is supposed to mean a large piece of artillery belonging to the duke of Ferrara, which, from the vast execution it did in the field, had justly acquired the name of the GREAT DEVIL.

RUSCELL.

Not

Not less than one was slain at every wound,
 But oftener two at once he hurl'd to ground:
 Now four, now five he slew; and soon remain'd
 A hundred breathless by his fatal hand. 105
 The sword, which from his noble side he drew,
 Cuts, like soft curd, the hardest steel in two.
 This sword, the work of Falerina's skill,
 Was in Orgagna's garden forg'd to kill
 The bold Orlando: but her alter'd mind 110
 Full soon repented what she once design'd:
 For all her arts she found in vain employ'd,
 When with this sword her garden he destroy'd.
 What horrors now, what slaughter must it yield,
 When giv'n in such a warrior's hand to wield! 115
 If e'er Rogero force or skill possess'd,
 To save his mistress now it shone confess'd.
 As the poor hare defends her from the hound,
 So from the knight the crowds their safety found.
 What numbers by his thundering arm lay dead! 120
 But who shall number those who trembling fled!

Meanwhile the damsel loos'd the cruel bands
 That captive held the wretched victim's hands;

Ver 108. — *Falerina's skill, &c*] See note to Book xli.
 ver. 192, for an account of this adventure.

With zealous speed she arm'd them for the fight,
The buckler grac'd his left, the sword his right. 125
Fir'd with his wrongs, he rush'd with vengeful mind,
To vent his rage on that degenerate kind,
Such were his deeds, as future times shall tell
That valour which he then approv'd so well.

The parting fun beneath the western main 130
Had plung'd, in ruddy waves, his golden wain,
When, with the youth preserv'd from cruel fate,
Rogeró issu'd victor from the gate.

The youth, repriev'd by good Rogeró's aid
From threaten'd death, his grateful thanks repaid: 135
Thanks ever due to one, who thus unknown,
Had for another's safety risk'd his own;
Then begg'd him to reveal his name, and show,
To whom his life could such deliverance owe.

Rogeró to himself—Lo! there are seen 140
My fair-one's features, with her beauteous mien;
But not the voice of Bradamant I hear,
Whose sweetness stole upon my raptur'd ear.
Not such the thanks that Bradamant would pay
To him she loves on this eventful day. 145
But can it be—or can my faithful dame
So soon forget her dear Rogeró's name?

To

To ease his doubts, he thus with courteous grace:
 These eyes are, sure, familiar to thy face;
 But when, or where, I seek in vain to find, 150
 Thou, gentle youth, relieve my wandering mind.

Thou may'st, ere this, Sir knight, have met these
 eyes,
 But when, or where, I know not, (he replies)
 Since through the world, like other knights, I range
 From land to land, to seek adventures strange. 155
 Perchance in me a sister's form appears,
 Who wears the cuirass, and the falchion rears.
 Our birth was one—and oft our semblant make
 Has held our parents in a fond mistake:
 Not thou the first, of numbers, who, deceiv'd 160
 By either's looks, have each for each believ'd,
 One difference only seen—these tresses shorn
 Scarce reach my shoulders, as by men are worn:
 While her's, with lengthen'd growth, in many a fold,
 Beneath her helm in filken braids are roll'd. 165
 Once on her head a Pagan's weapon fell
 With ghastly wound, but how, 'twere long to tell;

Ver. 167. *With ghastly wound, &c.*] Bradamant, being without her helmet, was wounded by a Pagan, and afterwards cured of the wound by a father of the order of Jesus, who, for that purpose, caused her hair to be cut off; to which circumstance Ariosto several times alludes.

See General View of BOYARDO'S Story.

When, for her cure, a holy father's care
(Of Jesus' train) lopt close her length of hair:
No sign was then that either could proclaim, 170
And all our difference was in sex and name.
Her Bradamant, call Richardetto me;
I brother to Rinaldo, sister she.

If now you deign to lend attention, hear
A wondrous tale that well deserves your ear: 175
A chance, which from our mutual likeness rose,
Begun in joy, but nearly clos'd in woes.

Rogero, who no other tale requir'd,
No sweeter converse than of her desir'd,
Of her his best belov'd, and sole delight, 180
Besought the youth his story to recite.

He thus began. As through the woodland shade,
With tresses shorn, my martial sister stray'd,
One day fatigu'd with toil, and faint with heat,
She reach'd a pleasant fountain's cool retreat; 185
Then left her steed, her shining helm unbound,
And sunk in slumber on the verdant ground.
Not all the fables ancient poets tell,
Or fancy'd legends, can this truth excel.

A royal virgin, eager at the chace, 190
Fair Floridespina, to the lonely place

By

By fortune came, and drawing nigh, survey'd
 My sleeping sister in bright arms array'd,
 All, save her head: her side the falchion wore,
 And every part a manly semblance bore. 195
 Struck with her form, awhile the virgin gaz'd
 In wonder rapt, till Love a passion rais'd,
 That soon through all her tender bosom blaz'd. }
 She urg'd her to the chace; then from the crew
 Of horns and hounds the seeming champion drew 200
 To where no prying witness might intrude,
 In deepest shade of friendly solitude.
 By words and gesture there, the gentle maid
 The secret of her deep-struck heart betray'd:
 With langour-darting eyes, with sighs of fire, 205
 She show'd her soul consuming with desire.
 Now from her cheeks the rosy colour fled;
 Returning warmth now flush'd the deep'ning red:
 Till, lost in thoughts of visionary bliss,
 And bolder grown, she ventur'd on a kiss 210

Ver. 210. *And bolder grown, &c.*] This behaviour of Florde-
 spina seems an outrage on all female decency; but it must be remem-
 bered, that our poet, in this extensive work, exhibits every kind of per-
 sonage; that the attractions of Florde spina are merely the attractions
 of beauty, and that her character is so far from being amiable, that
 the Italian commentators have made her to represent inordinate and
 ungoverned passion.

Too well my sister knew her manly frame,
And martial guise, beguil'd the gentle dame;
She knew no power t' assuage the fair one's smart,
And soft compassion touch'd her friendly heart.

Then to herself——'Twere better to reveal 215
My woman's sex, and thus her frenzy heal;
To own myself a maid of gentle mind,
Not seem a youth of rude degenerate kind:
And well she said—for recreant must he prove
A man, whose pulse was never warm to love; 220
Who, when some beauteous damsel courts his arms,
With youthful sweetness and alluring charms,
Should waste in talk the hour good fortune brings,
And, like a cuckoo, hang his coward wings.

My sister now, with mild address, prepar'd 225
To soothe the virgin, and the truth declar'd;
That like Camilla, panting for a name,
Or fierce Hyppolita, she burn't for fame;
And in Arzilla born, on Afric's shore,
From earliest youth the lance and buckler bore. 230

In vain she spoke; her words no spark remove
Of passion kindled in the fire of love:
Too late the medicine came to heal the smart,
Since Love, alas! too deep has plung'd his dart.

When'er

Whene'er she views the manly mien and arms, 235
 A tranſient hope her beating boſom warms;
 But ſoon the lov'd one's ſex recall'd to mind,
 Again is hope to cold deſpair reſign'd.

Whoe'er that day had heard the virgin mourn,
 Would ſigh for ſigh, and tear for tear return. 240

Did ever wretch (ſhe cry'd) ſuch torments know
 To equal what I feel—my cureleſs woe!

All other loves, ſave mine, ſucceſs may find,
 Whether of lawful or of impious kind.

From the ſharp thorn the blooming roſe we part, 245
 But vain deſire muſt ever rend my heart.

Ah, ruthleſs Love! ſince envious of my bliſs,
 Thou muſt, with cruel pains, pollute my peace,
 Suffic'd it not to give ſome common wound,
 Which others from thy various darts have found? 250
 Ne'er miſt the human race, or beſtial train,
 A female ſeeks a female's love to gain:

Ver. 241. *Did ever wretch, &c.*] This complaint of Flordeſpina is cloſely copied from the fable of Iphis and Ianthe, in Ovid. See Metam. But while the poet makes Flordeſpina enumerate the unnatural loves of Semiramis, Paſiphaë, and Myrrha, and complain of the ſingularity of her own, he ſeems entirely to forget the ſtory of Iphis and Ianthe.

No damfel's charms attract a damfel's fight,
 Nor hinds in hinds, nor lambs in lambs delight:
 In air—on earth—but one, alas! can prove, 255
 And I, alas! that one—so strange a love.
 Thus, ruthless power! my wretched fate must show
 A great example of thy rule below.
 The wife of Ninus, by the furies fir'd,
 To her son's bed with impious lust aspir'd: 260

Ver. 259. *The wife of Ninus*—] Semiramis. This name is said to have been given her because she was nourished by doves, which are so called in the Syrian tongue. Many fables are told of her. Diodorus Siculus relates, that she was born in a wood, near the city of Ascalonia; that her mother was a reputed goddess, and her father a priest; that at her birth she was concealed in a grotto, where the doves, stealing milk from the shepherds, carried it to the infant. He relates, that she was afterwards brought up by the king's head shepherd, and in process of time married Ninus, king of Assyria. At his death she took upon her the government of the empire, and was famous for her courage and conduct. She was a princess of the most abandoned principles; and, in order to conceal her amours, is said to have caused every man to be put to death who partook of her favours. She had a son by her husband called Ninus, with whom, some say, she fell in love; and that, upon her solicitation to comply with her impious desires, she was slain by him. Others say, that she married him; and in order to cover her guilt, enacted a law, by which it was permitted for a mother to marry her son.

PORCACCHI.

Myrrha her father lov'd ; the Cretan dame
A bull deceiv'd——but wilder is my flame.
In these the females still the males pursue,
And each attain'd her wish, if tales be true.
But here should Dedalus his arts apply, 265
No art could such a Gordian knot untie,
Which Nature fram'd to make my passion vain,
Nature, whose laws must every power restrain.

Thus to herself laments the fair distressed,
And feeds eternal anguish in her breast: 270
She rends her locks, she tears her lovely cheeks,
While on herself a mad revenge she seeks:
Touch'd with her woe, my pitying sister hears,
Sighs back her sighs, and answers tears with tears.
In vain she strives to cure her senseless love, 275
No words can soothe her, and no reasons move;
While she, who seeks not comfort but relief,
Still mourns the more, and sinks from grief to grief.

The day but little now remain'd to run,
Red in the west appear'd the setting sun: 280
And time requir'd to seek a port for those
That would not there in forest wilds repose;
When now the virgin huntress made request,
For Bradamant beneath her roof to rest.

My fister, yielding to the dame consent, 285

Together to Marfilius' town they went ;

Where but for thee, whose aid so tamely came,

These wretched limbs had fed the hungry flame.

Arriving, Flordeispina to the place,

My fister welcom'd with a fister's grace ; 290

Then in a female garb her friend array'd,

That all who saw might know her for a maid :

And more—she hop'd the cause of her distress

From error nourish'd by the manlike dress ;

The dress once chang'd, her fond desire might cease,

And all her bosom be compos'd to peace. 296

Ah ! how unlike that night the couch they press'd !

One soundly lock'd in all-composing rest :

One waking sigh'd, or if she clos'd her eyes,

In broken slumbers flattering visions rise. 300

She fancies, at her prayer, indulgent Heaven

To Bradamant a better sex had given.

As worn with tedious watch the patient dreams

(Long parch'd with feverish thirst) of limpid streams,

And cooling draughts ; so she in sleep enjoys 305

What all in vain her waking thought employs.

Sudden she starts, extending round the bed

Her longing hands ; but finds the blessing fled.

That night what offerings she to Macon vow'd,
 To every power!—that for her sake bestow'd 310
 Some miracle, in pity to her flame,
 Might to a youth transform the virgin dame.
 In vain she prays—in vain her tears—her love—
 No Macon hears her, and no powers approve.
 All night she mourn'd, till Phœbus from the wave 315
 His locks disclos'd, and light returning gave:
 The light return'd, from bed the pair arose,
 Day adding force to Floridespina's woes:
 For Bradamant (whom much it irk'd to prove
 The hapless object of so vain a love, 320
 And by her presence more enflame the smart)
 Declar'd her speedy purpose to depart.
 But, ere she went, fair Floridespina brought
 A stately steed, with trappings richly wrought;
 To these a furcoat join'd of costly make, 325
 Work'd by her hands, and will'd her, for the sake
 Of parting love, the precious gifts to take.

And now my sister urg'd her speedy way
 To Mount Albano, ere the close of day;
 Where we, her mother and her brethren, flew 330
 With eager joy, her welcome face to view.

Her helm unlac'd, we saw her tresses shorn,
 Which once in fillets round her head were worn;
 Nor less we wonder'd o'er her arms to find
 A surcoat us'd by knights of foreign kind; 335
 Her wound receiv'd and cur'd, her shorten'd hair,
 She told, and how in woods the huntress fair
 Surpris'd her sleeping; nor conceal'd the love
 The virgin proffer'd in the lonely grove;
 What pity touch'd her breast, and how the maid 340
 Had to the neighbouring fort her steps convey'd,
 Where in sad state she left the fair to mourn:
 With all that had befall'n till her return.

Well known to me was Flordeispina's name,
 At Saragozza I beheld the dame, 345
 And since in France; when, not unmov'd, I view'd
 Her sparkling eyes, her features rosy hu'd,
 Her neck of snow—but cautious I repress'd
 The young desire awakening in my breast;
 Since hopeless love can never harbour rest. 350 }
 But now such fair occasion gave it way,
 My flame reviv'd that long extinguish'd lay.
 Love fram'd the web of hope, and in the loom,
 Prepar'd the texture of my joys to come:

He taught me with the fair a pleasing part, 355
To gain the blifs that fires the lover's heart.
Eafy the fraud—my face and mien fo like
My fifter's form, that each beholder ftrike
With feemblant looks, might well the dame deceive,
To make her fondly all I wifh'd believe. 360

Awhile I paus'd—but young and amorous blood
Impell'd me to embrace the proffer'd good.
The mighty fecret that employ'd my thought,
To none I told, of none I counfel fought.
At night I haften'd where the arms were plac'd, 365
The arms my fifter from her limbs unbrac'd.
Array'd in thefe, and mounted on her fteed
I went, nor till the day deferr'd my fpeed :
All night I rode till early dawn of day,
While love and Flordefpina led the way : 370
Her feat I reach'd, ere from th' ethereal height,
The fun in briny waves had quench'd his light.
Each knew the fteed I rode, the arms I wore,
With which my fifter left the gate before ;
And, happy he, who with difpatchful care, 375
Firft brings the tidings to the royal fair ;
Who from the princely dame can bear away
Such thanks and gifts as fits a queen to pay.

Soon

Soon Flordebspina came, with eager pace,
The smile of transport brightening in her face ; 380
And flew to meet me with a warm embrace. }
Around my neck her milk-white arms she threw,
And kiss'd my lips as to my breast she grew.
Think at the time if Love employ'd his dart,
And drove the thrilling weapon to my heart. 385
My hand she seiz'd, nor sought the menial aid
Of page or dame, but to her room convey'd.
Her steps I follow'd : there, with eager haste,
Herself from helm to spur my arms unlac'd.
A garment, late her own, she took, and dress'd 390
My youthful members in a female vest,
Of artful work, with costly labour crown'd ;
And in a golden caul my hair she bound.
My eyes I govern'd like a bashful maid,
Nor look, nor voice, my manly sex betray'd. 395
And now she brought me to a stately hall,
Where knights and gallant dames, assembled all,
Receiv'd us entering, and such honours paid,
As suit the rank of queen or princely maid.
In secret oft I smil'd, when I beheld 400
The courtly youths, by soft desire impell'd,

With wanton glances meet my bashful eyes ;
Nor know what lurk'd beneath my coy disguise.

'Twas late ; and now remov'd the festive board,
With every viand of the season stor'd, 405
The princely maid, by fond affection led,
That night receiv'd me to partake her bed.
The train of pages gone, with all the state
Of dames and maids accustom'd there to wait,
We, both despoil'd of vests, together lay, 410
With torches flaming like the beams of day.

Then thus—Be not surpriz'd, O lovely maid !
To find your guest so soon return'd (I said) ;
When you, perchance, believ'd me wandering far,
And hop'd to see me—Heaven knew when or where !
First learn the cause I left you thus to mourn, 416
Then learn the cause of my unlook'd return.
Could my long dwelling here, O gentle dame !
Have quench'd the sparks of your unhappy flame,
Ne'er had I left your roof, by night or day, 420
Blest in your sight to wear my life away.
But since my presence more inflam'd your grief,
I deem'd my absence best could yield relief.
Chance led my travel from the beaten road
Through the deep mazes of a tangled wood, 425

Where

Where loud resounding from the neighbouring shade,
I heard a female voice that call'd for aid :

I ran, and close behind a crystal brook,

Beheld a fawn, that in his meshes took

A naked damsel from the stream, and stood 430

Prepar'd to make the prey his living food.

I saw, and instant flew with sword in hand,

By force his cruel purpose to withstand.

The impious fisher, of his life bereft,

She to the stream return'd which late she left. 435

Thou hast not given me aid (she cries) in vain,

Ask what thou wilt, and, what thou ask'st, obtain.

A watery nymph am I, and here reside,

Beneath the surface of this limpid tide.

All miracles are mine—my power can force 440

The elements, and alter Nature's course :

Drawn by my voice, the moon her sphere for-
fakes,

Fire turns to ice, and air a body takes :

And oft, by simple words, my power I prove

To stop the sun, the solid earth to move. 445

Now fix thy choice—and at thy choice receive

What fits thee best to ask, and me to give.

So

So proffer'd she ; but I no wealth desir'd,
 Nor rule, nor lands, nor o'er mankind aspir'd
 To rise in knowledge, or in arts excel ; 450
 Or gain a victor's name by warring well :
 I only wish'd some healing balm to find,
 To cure the longing of thy love-sick mind ;
 Nor more presum'd to speak, her wisdom best
 Could point the means—to her I left the rest. 455

Scarce had I ended, when beneath the tide
 Once more she plung'd, nor to my words reply'd ;
 But in my face the sprinkling waters threw ;
 And scatter'd o'er my limbs the magic dew. 459
 When (strange to tell) I felt through all my frame
 Unheard of change ! my sex no more the same,
 And from a woman I a man became. }

To ease thy doubt—the certain proof receive
 Of what, untry'd, thy thoughts could ne'er believe.
 As in my former sex, so boast I still 465

To thee devoted all my power and will.
 Then task them both—for ever shall they prove
 Henceforth the slaves of Floridespina's love.

Thus I—and gently now her hand I seize,
 To soothe her hopes, and every doubt appease, 470

Grant

Grant Heaven! (she cry'd) if sleep such dreams
can make,

I still may sleep, and never more awake.

Between us two, from all securely kept,
A few short months th' important secret slept.
But soon (how fleet is bliss!) our loves betray'd, 475
Some spy the tidings to the king convey'd.
My doom was seal'd—and thou, whose noble hand
Redeem'd my life from yon relentless band,
Beheldst me sentenc'd on the blazing pyre,
My crime to expiate in consuming fire. 480

Thus Richardetto to Rogero told
The tale of love, while through the night they hold
Their

Ver. 472. — *never more awake.*] Two licentious stanzas of the original are here omitted in the translation, and were expunged by the poet from a printed copy in his possession, published in the year 1532. Ruscelli saw this copy in the hands of Galasso Ariosto, the brother of Ludovico, and it is certain, by a letter from Galasso to Peter Bembo, that Ariosto, had he lived, meant to have revised this edition, and to have given another with his last corrections and improvements; in which, it is highly probable, that most of, if not all, these exceptionable parts would have been totally changed or omitted.

Ver. 481. *Thus Richardetto to Rogero told, &c.*] This account of Floridespina's love for Bradamant is continued from Boyardo. Some readers may probably wish that our poet had made
the

Their dreary course, and gain a rising ground,
 With pendent rocks and caves encompass'd round.
 A narrow, stony path before them lay, 485
 And up the mountain led their weary way,
 Where Agrismont, a stately castle, stands,
 Which Aldiger, of Clarmont's race, commands.
 Though basely born, he, Buovo's offspring own'd,
 In Vivian and in Malagigi found 490
 A brother's name ; but credit not the tongue
 That speaks his lawful birth from Gerard sprung.
 Whate'er his fire, the youth of generous strain,
 Was prudent, liberal, courteous, and humane ;
 And night or day, what chance might e'er befall, 495
 He watch'd with care his lov'd fraternal wall.
 His kinsman, Richardetto, in the place
 Due welcome met, nor less the courteous grace,

the conclusion happier for Flordespina, but it may be alledged, that the manners of this princess not exhibiting a pattern of female modesty, she has less claim to the sympathy of the reader, or the attention of the poet ; and, perhaps, a kind of moral may be deduced, if we consider her being totally forsaken by Richardetto, as a punishment for her breach of chastity.

Ver. 492. — *from Gerard sprung*—] Gerardo, a younger brother of Amon and Buovo, (See note to Book xxiii.) and by what Ariosto here says, it should seem that some author had made Aldiger the legitimate son of Gerard.

For

For Richardetto's sake, Rogero prov'd,
A kinsman dear by Aldiger belov'd ; 500
Though now his guests he met not with that air
Of cheerful greeting he was wont to wear,
But penfive came: that day were tidings brought,
Which fill'd his face with grief, his breast with
thought.

Instead of glad salute, with heavy look,
Young Richardetto first he thus bespoke.

Alas! my kinsman—hear me now disclose
Unwelcome news, to speak our kindred's woes.
Know Bertolagi, sprung of ruthless seed,
Has with Lanfusa, ruthless dame! agreed 510
Large wealth, in sums of countless gold to pay,
For which our captive brethren to convey,
Vivian and Malagigi, to the hand
Of Bertolagi, and his impious band.

E'er since the time Ferrau subdu'd in fight 515
Our kinsmen, has she kept each helpless knight
In the drear confines of a darksome cell,
Till this dire compact which I loath to tell.
To morrow's sun the prisoners, with a guard,
He sends to Bertolagi, where prepar'd, 520

Ver 510. *Has with Lanfusa—*] Lanfusa, the mother of Ferrau.

Near fair Bayona, he with gifts of cost
 Shall buy the dearest blood that France can boast.
 To our Rinaldo on a swift-foot steed
 The news I sent, but much I fear our need
 Requires that speedy succour from his sword, 525
 The length of way forbids him to afford.
 No force have I to lead against the foe ;
 My will is prompt, but, ah ! my means are slow.
 Then, whither shall I turn, what method try ?
 If in his hands they fall, they surely die. 530

Ill Richardetto this advice receiv'd,
 Which, grieving him, no less Rogero griev'd :
 He saw, where both in pensive silence stood,
 Opprest with evil chance, despairing good ;
 Then dauntless thus—Compose each anxious breast,
 With me alone this enterprize shall rest ; 536
 Against a thousand weapons shall you see,
 Mine boldly drawn to set your brethren free :
 My single arm the Pagan bands shall face ;
 Give but a guide to lead to yonder place, 540 }
 Where such a compact threatens your wretched race.
 Soon shall the battle's tumult reach your ear,
 Though distant, each the cries or groans shall hear,

Of those that bargain for each wretched thrall,
Of those that fly me, or of those that fall. 545

Thus he ; and what he spoke one warrior knew
By proof late seen, his deeds might well make true ;
While one scarce heard, or heard but as the words
Of those, whose boasting little hope affords.

But Richardetto him aside address'd, 550

And told how late his life, when fore distress'd,
Rogero sav'd, and well he knew his deed
On fit occasion would his speech exceed.

At this good Aldiger with alter'd mind,
To do him reverence every thought inclin'd ; 555

And, at his table plac'd, where Plenty pour'd
Her well-fill'd horn ; he honour'd as his lord.

And now the knights and noble youth agree,
Without more aid the captive pair to free.

The hour approach'd, when sleep prepar'd to
close 560

The eyes of lords and knights in soft repose,
All, save Rogero's ; in whose anxious breast
Corroding thought repell'd approaching rest.

The siege of Agramant, which late he heard,
Engross'd his thoughts ; he knew each hour de-
ferr'd 565

To

To join his lord, must fully his fair fame ;
 Nor could he, but with deepest sense of shame,
 Assist his sovereign's foes, and own the Christian
 name.

His change of faith at other times had prov'd
 A mind sincere, by pure religion mov'd, 570
 But now, when Agramant, in state distress,
 Requir'd his arm, might rather speak him prest
 With dastard fear, than urg'd by force of truth:
 While these reflexions pain the generous youth,
 He dares not yet to Agramant depart, 575
 Without her leave, the sovereign of his heart.
 Each thought by turns his dubious bosom sways;
 Now this prevails, and now more lightly weighs.
 Once had he hop'd, but vainly hop'd, to meet
 His Bradamant at Floridespina's seat, 580
 Which with the guiding fair and martial maid*,
 He lately fought in Richardetto's aid.
 And now he calls to mind his first design,
 At Vallambrosa's walls his love to join,
 His virgin-love, who there might well expect 585
 His sight in vain, and blame his slow neglect.

* BRADAMANT.

His thoughts thus changing, never at a stay,
 He fix'd at length, by letter to convey
 His secret soul; though doubtful yet whose care
 Might to her hand the gentle message bear; 590
 Yet trusts that chance would on his way provide
 A messenger, in whom he might confide.

He quits his bed—and pens and light demands:
 The ready pages, with officious hands,
 Each need supply—and first, as lovers use, 595
 He greets her fair, then greets th' unwelcome news.
 He bids her think, on him what shame must wait,
 Should death or bondage be his sovereign's fate:
 That since he hop'd her husband's name to gain,
 No slightest blemish must his honour stain: 600
 As nought impure must her pure love enjoy,
 Whose soul was truth, refin'd from all alloy.

Ver. 593. *He quits his bed, and pens and light, &c.*]

The Italian.

_____falta delle piume,
 Sa fa dar carta, inchiostro, penna e lume

Literally,

_____He leaps from his bed,
 And causes paper, ink, pens, and a light to be given him.

These familiar passages cannot well be rendered in our language,
 and it is surely difficult to convey, in any tolerable manner, the au-
 thor's sense in English verse.

If e'er he wish'd to purchase virtuous fame,
Or wish'd, when purchas'd, to preserve the claim,
What must he now, when she, his future wife, 605
Would share with him in each event of life?
With him in weal or woe be ever join'd,
Two bodies link'd by one informing mind?
And as he oft had vow'd, he thus once more
His vows confirm'd; the fated season o'er, 610
For which he to his lord must keep unstain'd
His loyal truth; he then, if life remain'd,
By every proof would all her fears relieve,
And Christian faith with open rites receive;
And from her fire, her brother, all her train 615
Of kindred friends, her hand in marriage gain.
First will I raise (he said) with thy consent,
The siege by which my sovereign lord is pent,
Lest men should say, while Agramant maintain'd
His prosperous state, Rogero firm remain'd; 620
But now, for Charles, since Fortune changes hands,
He spreads his standard with the victors' bands.
Some thrice five days, or twenty, let me prove
My force, my monarch's danger to remove,
Then will I frame a just excuse, to take 625
My leave of Agramant—for honour's sake,

I ask

I ask no more, and all my future life
I give to thee, my mistress and my wife.

In phrase like this, Rogero painted well 629

His secret thoughts, which scarce the Muse can tell;

Nor stay'd his pen, till words, fast flowing o'er,

The love-directed page could hold no more.

The letter ending here, the lines he seal'd,

And sealing, in his careful bosom held,

In hopes some friend, ere one revolving day, 635

Might to her hand the gentle charge convey.

The letter clos'd, he clos'd in slumber deep,

His heavy lids o'er-watch'd—the Power of Sleep

Stood near his couch, and o'er his members threw

The peaceful drops of Lethe's silent dew. 640

He slept, till in the east a breaking cloud,

With blended hues of white and purple glow'd;

Whence flowers were strow'd o'er all the smiling
skies,

And, thron'd in gold, the morn began to rise.

Ver. 629. *In phrase like this, &c.*] Spenser has in like manner introduced a letter into his poem, upon which Mr. Upton observes, "Spenser has not the authority of Homer and Virgil for introducing an epistle in his epic poem, but he has the authority of Ariosto."

R 2

When

When now the birds from every verdant spray, 645
With early music hail'd the new-born day,
Good Aldiger (Rogero thence to lead,
With Richardetto, where their venturous deed
Must set the brethren free from captive bands,
Condemn'd to impious Bertolagi's hands) 650
Was first on foot; and with him either guest
Who heard the summons, left his downy rest.
Now cloth'd with temper'd steel, in meet array,
Rogero with the kinsmen took his way.

Oft had Rogero pray'd, but pray'd in vain, 655
His single arm might that day's glory gain;
The two, through ardour in their kinsmen's cause
To join his arms, and urg'd by honour's laws,
Like rocks unmov'd, refus'd to him to yield
Alone the danger of so brave a field. 660

The hour approach'd, when either Pagan train
Prepar'd to bring each car, and loaded wain,
With Malagigi, Vivian, and the gold
For which the wretched chiefs were bought and sold.
The warriors reach'd the place: a field that lay, 665
Of wide extent, expos'd to Phœbus' ray:
No laurel there, no myrtle's fragrant wood,
Nor oak, nor elm, nor lofty cypress stood;

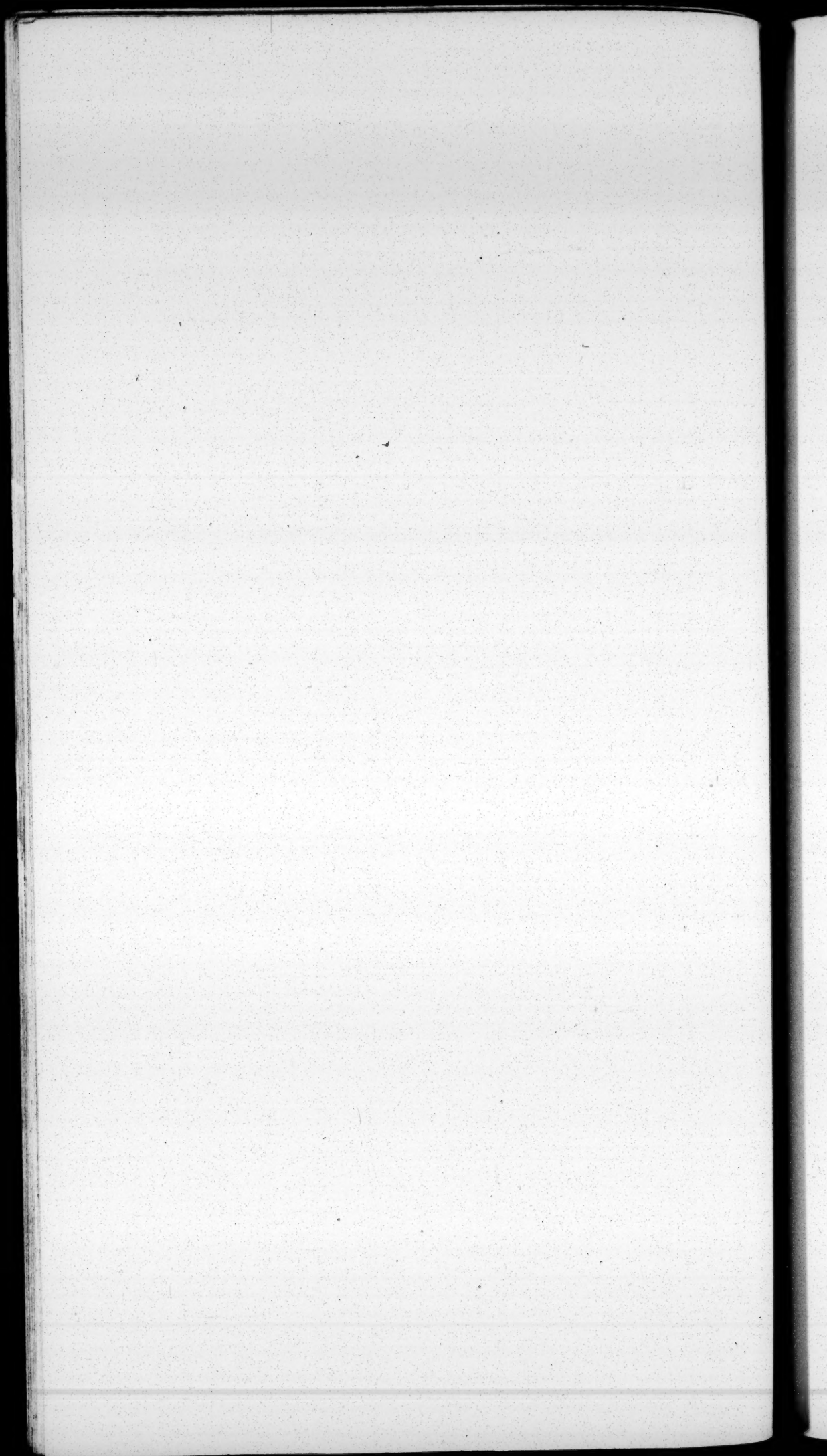
But thorns and brambles choak'd the barren foil,
That felt no spade, nor own'd the ploughman's
toil. 670

The three bold champions check'd their courfers'
rein,

Where stretch'd a path extending o'er the plain;
When drawing nigh, a warrior they behold,
Array'd in costly arms that flam'd with gold,
In whose fair shield of vivid green, appears 675
The wondrous bird that lives a thousand years.

Here cease, my lord, while thus the book I close,
And, pausing here, entreat awhile repose.

END OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH BOOK.



THE
TWENTY-SIXTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

R 4

THE ARGUMENT.

ROGERO, Richardetto, and Aldiger, meet an unknown warrior, who joins their party. They attack the troops of Maganza and the Moor, and defeat them. Rogero and Marphisa signalize their valour. The prisoners, Malagigi and Vivian are set at liberty. The warriors reposing themselves after the battle, Malagigi explains to the rest the mystical sculpture on the fountain made by Merlin. Hippalca arrives, and gives an account to Richardetto and Rogero of her losing Frontino, which was taken away by Rodomont. Rogero departs to revenge the affront. Arrival of Rodomont, Mandricardo, and Doralis: Mandricardo jousts with all the knights, and overthrows them: His battle with Marphisa. Rogero returns to the fountain. Strange dissensions amongst the warriors. Rogero claims his horse of Rodomont; and Mandricardo wrangles with Rogero for the device on his shield. Rodomont, Mandricardo, and Rogero fight: Marphisa takes part with Rogero. Malagigi, fearing for the safety of Richardetto attacked by Rodomont, causes, by his magic art, a demon to enter the horse of Doralis, which carrying her away, she is immediately followed by Mandricardo and Rodomont, who are afterwards pursued by Rogero and Marphisa.

THE
TWENTY-SIXTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE generous dames, of ancient time, despis'd
The charms of wealth, and virtue only priz'd:
In this our age, we see the female train
Scarce bend a wish to aught but fordid gain.
Yet those who, blest with inbred goodness, shun 5
That love of gold which has the sex undone,
Living, content and peace may justly claim;
And, dead, should find the meed of endless fame.
For ever, sure, must Bradamant be prais'd,
Who not her thoughts to power or riches rais'd, 10
But lov'd, whate'er bespoke the noble mind,
Grace, courage, honour, in Rogero join'd;
And well deserv'd a knight of such desert
Should bear her image in his constant heart;

And

And for her sake those valorous deeds atchieve, 15
Which after-ages scarcely could believe.

Rogero, with the two, as late I told,
With Aldiger and Richardetto bold,
(The knights of Clarmont) bright in steel array'd,
Prepar'd to give the brother-prisoners aid. 20
I told you how a warrior cross'd the field,
Of fearless gesture, bearing on his shield
The bird that from its ashes springs to birth,
And (strange to tell) but one appears on earth.

Soon as the knight unknown, advancing, view'd 25
Where each brave chief prepar'd for combat stood,
Eager he burn'd to prove, in martial deed,
How far their valour with their looks agreed.
Is there amongst you one who dares (he cries) 30
With me in single fight dispute the prize?
With spear or sword in rough encounter meet,
Till one shall fall, while one retains his seat?

That man were I—(thus Aldiger reply'd)
With thee the sword to wield, the spear to guide:
But (as thyself shalt see) far other talk 35
Bids us refuse what courage bids thee ask;
A task, that scarce permits these few short words,
Much less the time to run at tilt affords.

Behold, where station'd here we three prepare,
At least six hundred men in arms to dare, 40
That by our love and valour may be freed
Two wretched friends, to cruel bonds decreed.

He said ; and to the brave unknown reveal'd
The cause at full that brought them to the field.

Well hast thou urg'd such reasons as suffice 45
For just excuse, (the stranger thus replies)
And sure three knights you seem whose dauntless
worth

Scarce meets its equal through the spacious earth.
With you I fought, erewhile, to run the course
On equal terms, for proof of either's force: 50
But since on others I shall see your might
Far better try'd—I claim no more the fight:
But this I claim—my arms with yours to wield,
With yours to join this helmet, lance and shield,
And trust to prove, when on your side I stand, 55
Not undeserving of so brave a band.

Some here may wish to learn the warrior's name,
Who thus, a fearless candidate for fame,
Would with Rogero and his fellows meet 60
The dreadful hazards of their hardy feat.

SHE

SHE then (no longer HE this champion call)
Was bold Marphisa, from whose hand his fall
Zerbino suffer'd, sworn by her to guard,
Gabrina foul, for every ill prepar'd.

The good Rogero, and each noble lord 65
Of Clarmont's house, receiv'd with one accord
The proffer'd aid of her, whom all esteem'd
Of manly sex, as by her drefs she seem'd.

Not long they stay'd, ere Aldiger beheld,
And show'd his friends at distance on the field, 70
A banner rais'd, that to the breezes flow'd,
And round the banner throng'd a mingled crow'd.
When now advanc'd, so near in fight they drew,
That by their Moorish garb the warriors knew
The hostile band; amid the shouting throng 75
They saw the hapless brethren borne along
On two low steeds, expecting to behold,
For sums of wealth their persons chang'd and sold.

Then thus Marphisa—Wherefore such delay,
When these are present, to begin the fray? 80
Rogero answer'd—Of th' invited train
To crown the banquet, many guests remain,
Nor yet arriv'd—we form a solemn treat,
And all must join to make the feast complete,

Soon

Soon will the rest attend—While thus he said, 85
His bold compeers the remnant foes survey'd:
The traitors of Maganza's line advance,
And all is ready to begin the dance.

There swarm'd the numbers of Maganza's crew,
With groaning mules in loaded wains, that drew 90
Gold, vests, and precious wealth; while here were
seen

The captive brethren, with dejected mien;
Who slowly rode, in shameful shackles bound,
With lances, swords, and bows, encompass'd round;
And Bertolagi (cause of either's grief) 95
Was heard conferring with the Moorish chief.
Not Buovo's son, nor he * of Amon's strain,
The traitor present, could their wrath contain.
At once his spear in rest each warrior took;
And each, at once, the proud Maganzan struck. 100
One through his helm the deadly wound impress'd;
One drove the thrilling weapon through his breast.
As Bertolagi by these knights was slain,
Like him so perish all, that wrong maintain.

At this Marphisa with Rogero fir'd, 105
No other signal for th' attack requir'd;

* RICHARDETTO.

And ere her spear she broke, the martial maid
Low on the ground three warriors breathless laid.
The other impious chief was worthy found,
From fierce Rogero's spear to meet his wound: 110
He fell; and, by the same dire weapon slain,
Two more were sent to Death's relentless reign.
An error now amidst th' affail'd was bred,
That wide and wider to their ruin spread:
Those of Maganza deem'd themselves betray'd 115
By the fierce Saracens; the Moors, dismay'd
By frequent wounds and deaths on every hand,
With treacherous murder charg'd Maganza's band;
Till fell reproach to mutual carnage rose,
With spears in rest, drawn swords, and bended
bows. 120.

Now here, now there, by turns Rogero flew
On either troop; now ten, now twenty flew.
As many by the virgin's weapon kill'd,
In divers parts lay scatter'd o'er the field.
The rider from his saddle lifeless fell, 125
Whene'er descended either trenchant steel;
Helmet and corslets yielded where it came;
As crackling ferewood to destroying flame.

If

If e'er you saw, or e'er have heard the tale,
How, when fierce factions in the hive prevail, 130
As to the standard in the fields of air,
The buzzing legions for the fight prepare,
Amidst them oft the hungry swallow pours,
Rends, kills, or scatters, and whole troops devours:
So think Marphisa, so Rogero rag'd; 135
Alike by turns each dastard troop engag'd.
But Richardetto, nor his kinsman chang'd
The slaughter thus; nor thus alternate rang'd;
The band of Saracens untouch'd they leave,
While all their furies to Maganza's cleave. 140
Rinaldo's brother, to the dauntless mind
That fits a knight, had mighty prowess join'd;
And now the hatred he Maganza bore,
Gave twofold vigour to his wonted power:
This fir'd the base-born son of Buovo's bed, 145
Who, like a lion, his resentment fed:
Through helm and head his weapon took its course,
And both gave way before the crashing force.
What soul but here had caught the martial ire?
What breast but here had glow'd with Hector's fire?
Here, with Marphisa and Rogero join'd, 151
The choice, the flower of all the warrior-kind.

Marphisa

Marphisa, as she fought, oft turn'd her eyes,
 And view'd her comrades' deeds with vast surprise,
 She prais'd them all; but good Rogero rais'd 155
 Her wonder most, him o'er mankind she prais'd:
 Sometimes she deem'd that Mars had from above
 Left his fifth heaven, the fights of men to prove.
 She mark'd his dreadful sword, that never fail'd,
 Against whose edge no temper'd steel avail'd; 160
 The helm and cuirass strong it pierces through,
 It cleaves the rider to the seat in two,
 And fends, divided, in a crimson tide,
 The corse in equal parts on either side,
 Nor, deaden'd there, its dreadful fury stays, 165
 But with his wretched lord the courser flays.

Ver. 163. *And fends, divided in a crimson tide,
 The corse in equal parts on either side,
 Nor, deaden'd there, &c.]*

These passages remind us of the wounds given by knights-errant in romances, so often ridiculed by Cervantes, and for which Ariosto is, with these authors, liable to the censure of extravagance. The host, who, like Don Quixote, is intoxicated with reading romances, makes the following eulogium on those performances, in answer to the priest who had recommended history. "Before God, your worship should have read what I have read concerning Felixmarte of Hyrcania, who with one back-stroke, cut afunder five giants in the middle, as if they had been so many bean-cods."

JARVIS'S Don Quixote, Vol. 1. B. iv. C. v.

From many a neck his falchion lops the head ;
Oft o'er the hips, sheer through the body sped,
It parts the trunk : now five the rapid steel
Severs at once—and more I fear to tell, 170
Left truth should falsehood seem : but Turpin fam'd,
Who knew the truth, and what he knew proclaim'd,
Leaves men to credit or reject his page,
Which blazons deeds unknown in this degenerate age.

Alike appear'd Marphisa's martial ire, 175
Her foes all frozen, and herself all fire !
While she no less attracts Rogero's gaze,
Than he before might claim the virgin's praise :
And as she deem'd him Mars, so, had he known
His partner's sex, to equal wonder won 180
Of her great deeds, he sure had stil'd the fair
The dread Bellona, patroness of war !
Caught each from each, their kindling ardor rose,
Dire emulation for their wretched foes !
On whom they thus their mutual prowess show'd, 185
On nerve, on bone, on limbs all drench'd in blood.
Full soon the might of these resistless four
Dispers'd each camp, and broke their strongest power.
Who hop'd to 'scape, his limbs from armour freed,
And stript in lighter vesture urg'd his speed. 190

Happy the man whose courser swiftest flies,
 No common pace his safety now supplies;
 While he, who wants a steed, laments the harms
 That more on foot attend the trade of arms.

The field and plunder to the conquering band 195
 Were left; nor guard, nor muleteer remain'd.
 There fled Maganza's force, here fled the Moor,
 Those left the prisoners, these their wealthy store.
 With joyful looks, and with exulting mind,
 The noble kinsmen hasten'd to unbind 200
 Vivian and Malagigi, whilst a train
 Bore heaps of treasure from the loaded wain;
 Vases of silver wrought, (the victor's prize)
 And female vests that flam'd with costly dyes;
 Viands, on which their hunger might be fed, 205
 With generous wines, and all-sustaining bread.

Each helm unlac'd, the noble warrior-maid
 Appear'd confest: her golden locks display'd

Ver. 207. ———— *the warrior-maid*

Appear'd confest———] So Britomart disarms in
 Spenser.

With that her glittering helmet she unlac'd,
 Which doth her golden locks that were upbound
 Still in a knot, unto her heels down trac'd.

FAIRY QUEEN, Book III. C. iv. St. 15

Both poets compare their respective heroines to Bellona.

Her hidden sex, and on her lovely face
Bright shone the charms that female features
grace. 210

With rapture, all the generous virgin view'd,
And now to learn her glorious name they su'd:
She, with her friends, to mild deportment us'd,
Complacent heard, nor what they wish'd refus'd.
On her, whose deeds so late their wonder rais'd, 215
Each ardent knight with eye infatiate gaz'd:
She on Rogero; him alone she heard,
With him alone she stood, with him conferr'd.

But now the pages call'd her to repair
Where, by a fountain's side, the feast to share, 220
In the cool shelter which a hill display'd,
Her friends repos'd beneath the grateful shade.
This fountain, rais'd with art, was one of four
Which Merlin made in France by magic lore;
Of purest marble was the structure bright, 225
With dazzling polish smooth, and milky white;
Here Merlin, by his skill divine, had brought
Expressive forms in rising sculpture wrought.
Thou would'st have said they seem'd in act to
strive,

And breathe, and move—in all but speech alive! 230

There, sculptur'd, from the woods a monster came,
Of fearful aspect, and of mingled frame :

Ver. 231. *There, sculptur'd, from the woods a monster came—*]
Most of the commentators have explained this monster to mean Avarice, which had over-run all the Christian world, and brought scandal on the professors of the faith. Sir John Harrington, who lived in an age of allegory, says, that Ariosto describes this vice very significantly ; he makes “ her ugly, because of all vices it is most hateful ; ears of an ass, being for the most part ignorant, or at least careless of other men’s good opinions ; a wolf in head and breast, namely, ravenous and never satisfied ; a lion’s grisly jaw, terrible and devouring ; a fox in all the rest, wily and crafty.” See notes to Sir John Harrington’s translation of this book.

Lavezuola, a commentator, extols this description of Ariosto, as far superior to Dante, who simply represents Avarice in the form of a lean and hungry wolf.

E una lupa, che di tutta brame,
Scontra carica con la sua magrezza,
E molte genti fè già viver grame.

INFERNO, Cant. I.

——Inflam’d with every fierce desire,
A famish’d she-wolf like a spectre came,
Beneath whose gripe shall many a wretch expire.

HAYLEY.

Mr. Upton thinks, that by this monster is characterised Superstition, as ignorant, ravenous, cruel, and cunning. See his note to *Fairy Queen*, Book I. C. viii. St. 48.

The different explanations prove the uncertainty that often attends allegorical description, though I cannot but think, from many circumstances, that Ariosto means to represent Avarice. Spenser, whose work is one continued allegory, would sometimes be totally unintelligible, but that he generally gives the names to his personified characters.

An afs's ears, a wolf's stern front he wore,
 With ravening teeth as long undrench'd with gore;
 A lion's rending paws: in all the rest 235
 His shape and hue the wily fox exprefs'd.
 With rage untam'd he travers'd Gallia's land,
 Spain, Italy, and England's distant strand:
 Europe and Asia had his force o'er-run,
 And every clime beneath the rolling sun. 240
 Where'er he pass'd the wounds or deaths he dealt,
 The low, the proud, and every station felt:
 But most the last—his fellest wrath he pour'd
 On king, on prince, on potentate and lord.
 The Roman court his worst of furies knew, 245
 There popes and mitred cardinals he slew.
 This beast the hallow'd seat of Peter foil'd,
 And with lewd scandals the pure faith defil'd.
 Before the monster's rage in ruins fall,
 Each strong-built fort, and well-defended wall. 250
 To honours even divine he dares pretend;
 He makes th' insensate crowd in homage bend;
 Bids servile tongues his impious glories swell,
 And boasts to keep the keys of heaven and hell.

Behold

Ver. 254. *And boasts to keep the keys, &c.*] It is not easy to say how far Ariosto meant to carry his satire, but a Protestant com-

Behold a warrior near, who round his hairs 255
 The sacred wreath of regal laurel wears :
 Three youths beside, whose kingly vestments hold,
 Inwrought with silk, the fleur-de-lis of gold :
 With these a lion the like signal shows ;
 And all combin'd the raging beast oppose. 260
 Of one the name is graven o'er his head,
 The name of one is in his garment read.
 Behold the chief, who to the hilt has gor'd
 The monster's bowels with his crimson'd sword :
 Francis the First of France—and near him stands 265
 Great Maximilian, lord of Austria's lands ;
 The emp'ror Charles (the fifth that bears the name)
 Has pierc'd his ravenous throat with deadly aim.
 Henry the Eighth of England next succeeds,
 Pierc'd by whose shaft in front the savage bleeds : 270
 Leo the Tenth, the name yon lion bears,
 Who fastening on his ears the monster tears :

mentator might very easily deduce from this passage a severe reflection on the sale of pardons and indulgences, in order to feed the avarice of the Romish clergy.

Ver. 271: *Leo the Tenth*—] Pope Leo X. here figured under the similitude of a lion, in which manner the poet often speaks of him ; a kind of punning allusion to his name.

Clofe

Close and more close these four the foe invade,
And others now advancing join in aid.

Pale terror seems to fly from every place, 275
While, ready to retrieve each past disgrace,
The nobles, though but few, united strive,
And the dire pest at length of life deprive.

Marphisa with the knights impatient fought
To know the chiefs at full, whose arms had wrought
A deed so brave, by whom the beast lay dead, 281
That far and wide such desolation spread;
Since the fair fount, with figures sculptur'd o'er,
The names discover'd, but reveal'd no more.

On Malagigi Vivian turns his eyes, 285
Who near in silence sat, and thus he cries:
'Tis thou must speak what all request to learn,
For in thy looks thy knowledge I discern:
Say, what are those, whose weapons, well employ'd,
Have, with yon lion's aid, the beast destroy'd ' 290

Then Malagigi—Think not you behold
A past event in story'd annals told;
Know first, the chiefs you see are yet unborn,
The chiefs whose deeds the marble fount adorn. 294
Seven hundred years elaps'd, their matchless worth
Shall gladden, in their age, the wondering earth:

Merlin, the magic sage, this fountain made,
 What time the British realm king Arthur sway'd.
 From hell this monster came to plague mankind,
 When lands were first by stated bounds confin'd; 300
 When commerce, weights, and measures first began,
 When written laws were fram'd 'twixt man and man.
 As yet his power no distant realm attain'd,
 But various countries long unhurt remain'd:
 He troubles, in our age, full many a place, 305
 And spreads his mischiefs through the human race.
 Since first on earth appear'd th' infernal beast,
 We see, and still shall see, his bulk increas'd
 Beyond the worst of plagues; not that so fam'd
 In ancient page, terrific Python nam'd, 310
 Can equal this!—What carnage shall be spread!
 In every part what baneful venom shed!
 Whate'er the sculpture shows his rage exceeds;
 Unutterable and detested deeds!
 Long shall the groaning world for mercy sue 315
 When these, whose names are read, these chosen few,

Ver. 310. ———*terrific Python*—] Python was a monstrous serpent, said by the ancient poets to have been engendered from the slime of the earth after the deluge. He was killed by the darts of Apollo; in commemoration of which event were instituted the Pythian games.

Whose

Whose fame must shine like Phœbus' beams display'd,

At utmost need shall bring their glorious aid.

Not one shall more the cruel beast appall,

Than Francis, whom the Franks their sovereign call.

He first of men!—with happy omens led, 321

The crown scarce settled on his youthful head,

Shall cross th' opposing Alps, and render vain

Whate'er against him would the pass maintain; 324

Impell'd by generous wrath t' avenge the shame

Which from the rustic folds and sheep-cotes came, }

With sudden inroad, on the Gallic name.

To Lombardy's rich fields he then descends,

The flower of Gallia on his march attends.

Th' Helvetian power he routs, as never more 330

To raise its pride to what it rose before :

Ver. 320. *Then Francis,—*] The poet, in this allegory, celebrates the liberality of the most magnanimous king Francis I. the successor of Lewis XII. who, for the unbounded generosity of his disposition, may not only be said to have deeply wounded, but in a manner destroyed, the monster Avarice. He was a munificent patron of art and genius.

Ver. 326. *Which from the rustic folds and sheep-cotes came—*] The poet means the Switzers, who, at that time followed no employment in their own country but that of shepherds and herdsmen.

Then

Then to the church's scandal, to the stain
 Of either camp, of Florence and of Spain,
 He storms the castle, which till then was held, 334
 Through strength of bulwark, never to be quell'd.
 Where'er he wields his weapon, prostrate lies
 Each hostile standard, or before him flies :
 Nor fosse nor rampart can his force oppose,
 And strongest walls in vain the town enclose.
 This glorious chief shall every gift possess 340
 By Heaven decreed the happiest prince to bless :
 As Cæsar brave ; his prudence far renown'd,
 As his at Thrasymene and Trebia found :
 Him Alexander's fortune shall attend :
 On every deed in vain our toil we bend, 345 }
 Unless good fortune our designs befriend.

Thus Malagigi spoke, and new desire
 In every knight was kindled to enquire
 The names of other chiefs, whose arms could quell
 The dreadful beast by whom such numbers fell. 350

Ver. 336. *Where'er he wields, &c.*] He means the emperor Charles V. whom he compares to Cæsar for his valour, to Fabius Maximus for his prudence, and to Alexander the Great for his success.

There,

There, midst the first, was read Bernardo's name,
 Whom Merlin's sculpture chronicled to fame:
 By him shall Bibiena gain renown,
 With neighbouring Florence, and Sienna's town.
 No foot shall step before Giovanni's place; 355
 Ghismond or Ludovico's deeds efface.
 Francisco see, nor from his generous fire
 Brave Frederico shrinks: an equal fire

His

Ver. 351. ——— *Bernardo's name.*—] This Bernardo was surnamed Divitio, though he was generally called Bibiena, from the town of that name near Florence, where he resided. He attached himself to the fortune of Giovanni di Medici, afterwards Leo, and was by him created cardinal of Santa Maria, in Portico. He wrote the comedy called *Callandra*, and caused it to be represented at Rome by the young nobility, in honour of Isabella duchess of Mantua. He died at no advanced age, having conceived hopes of obtaining the popedom on the decease of Leo.

Ver. 355. — *Giovanni—Ghismond—Ludovico*—] Three cardinals, Giovanni Salviati, one of the most ancient and illustrious families of Florence; a man of profound learning and virtue. Ghismondo Gonzaga, created cardinal by Julius II. The third was Ludovico of Arragon, likewise a cardinal.

Ver. 357. *Francisco see*—] Francisco Gonzaga, second of the name, and fourth marquis of Mantua, he succeeded to the possessions of his father Frederic at eighteen years of age, and fought
 against

His kinsmen feel: alike each dauntless look :
 Ferrar'as there, and here Urbino's duke : 360
 From one of these brave Guidobaldo sprung,
 Pursues his fire, with love of glory stung :
 With Ottobon there Sinabaldo drives
 The raging beast, and each for conquest strives.

against Charles VIII. of France ; he was a general of consummate skill and intrepidity, and Charles, enamoured of his worth, in vain endeavoured to corrupt his faith, and detach him from the Venetians.

FORNARI.

Ver. 358. — *Frederico.*—] Frederico Gonzaga, son of Francisco, after the death of his father, was by Leo X. made captain general of the Roman church, and of the republic of Florence. He was magnificent, liberal, just, and a great patron of virtue and learning.

FORNARI.

Ver. 360. *Ferrara's there, and here Urbino's duke :—*] Alphonso of Este, and Francisco Maria delle Rovere.

Ver. 361. — *Guidobaldo.*—] Guidobaldo the second, afterwards duke of Urbino, son of Francesco Maria.

Ver. 363. — *Ottobon—Sinabaldo.*—] Of these names were two noble youths, brothers of the family of Flischi at Genoa. Ottobon was an ecclesiastic. These retired into voluntary exile, that they might not, by a private enmity which they had incurred, draw a war upon their country. There were likewise two pontiffs of the same name. One was Innocent IV. first called Sinabaldo of Genoa, of the family of the Flischi. He ordered the cardinals to wear a red hat, and was a liberal and munificent pontiff. The other, Adrian IV. before called Ottobon, nephew of pope Innocent IV. of the same family and country, created cardinal by his uncle. He was a man of great ability and application, but lived only forty days after he came to the papal chair.

FORNARI.

Lewis

Lewis of Gazalo, with speeding art, 265
 Warms in the monster's neck the feather'd dart:
 His dart and bow had Phœbus' gift supply'd,
 When Mars the falchion girded to his side.
 See two Hippolitos of Este's breed;
 Two Hercules, and next of kindred feed 370
 Another Hercules, and near him shine
 A third Hippolito: this last the line
 Of Medicis: the first Gonzaga's race:
 All these with equal warmth the monster chace.

Ver. 365. *Lewis of Gazalo*—] Luigi Gonzaga, surnamed Rodomont from his valour, was the son of Ludovico Gonzaga, and called Gazalo from a castle which he held. This person is further spoken of in the succeeding notes.

Ver. 369. — *two Hippolitos*—] One, to whom the poet dedicates his book; the other, son of Alphonso duke of Ferrara, likewise a cardinal.

FORNARI.

Ver. 370. *Two Hercules*—] Hercules, the father of Alphonso duke of Ferrara, and his son afterwards duke of Ferrara.

FORNARI.

Ver. 371 *Another Hercules—a third Hippolito*—] Hercules Gonzaga, cardinal of Mantua: Hippolito of the honoured family of Medicis, cardinal of St. Lovenza. He died by poison, much lamented for his many virtues.

FORNARI.

Not

Not Julian's son above his fire prevails, 375
 Nor in his brother's steps Ferrantes fails:
 Unconquer'd Dorea shows an equal mind:
 By none Francisco Sforza left behind.
 See two appear, whose blood illustrious flows
 From noble Avolo, whose banner shows 380
 The rock which whelm'd beneath Typhæus bore,
 Typhæus fell with serpents cover'd o'er.

Ver. 375. *Not Julian's son—*] The brother of Lorenzo of Medicis was called Julian, and lost his life in a popular insurrection; but his death was afterwards severely revenged by the Florentines. His son was Pope Clement VII. born a few days after his father's death. FORNARI.

Ver. 376. *—Ferrantes—*] Ferrantes Gonzaga, brother to the duke of Mantua, at one time viceroy of the island of Sicily, and afterwards lieutenant of the duchy of Milan, and general of the army for the emperor. FORNARI.

Ver. 377. *Unconquer'd Dorea—*] See Book xv. note to ver. 218, where his character is displayed at large.

378 *—Francisco Sforza—*] He means the second Francisco Sforza, son of Ludovico il Moro, who having married the daughter of Christiern king of Datia, and sister to Charles V. obtained the duchy of Milan. FORNARI.

Ver. 379. *—two appear, whose blood illustrious flows
 From noble Avolo—*] This noble family of the Avoli came from Spain, well known at Toledo, and of great repute and antiquity. FORNARI.

Scarce

Scarce one so prompt as these in noble deed,
 Scarce one so prompt to make the monster bleed.
 See here Francesco of Pescara fam'd, 385
 And there Alphonso see of Vasco nam'd.
 Where is Gonfhalvo next, whose acts shall raise
 The Spanish realm with never-dying praise?
 Of him would Malagigi gladly tell,
 Whom none, in this intrepid band, excel. 390

Ver. 385. — *Francesco of Pescara*—] Marquis of Pescara and son of Alphonso. He was a great commander, and prosperous in every undertaking, except at Ravenna, where, receiving many wounds, he was taken prisoner; but fortune from that time was ever favourable to him. To the study of arms he joined the embellishment of letters; and while prisoner with the French, addressed to his wife Victoria an elegant dialogue on love. At last, after many victories obtained over the French, his strength being wasted with fatigue, he died in the flower of his age, covered with laurels. FURNARI.

Ver. 386. — *Alphonso—of Vasco*—] Cousin to the before-named Francesco, and no less an ornament to the house of Avoli.

FURNARI.

Ver. 387. ——— *Gonfhalvo*—] Gonfhalvo Ferrantes was born at Cordova in Andalusia, of an ancient and noble family. By his assistance Ferdinando conquered the city of Granada, and the kingdom of Naples. He gained the title of Great, and at last died of a fever in the seventy-second year of his age, in the year 1515. FURNARI.

William

William of Monferrato's name is read,
 With those who come the monster's blood to shed,
 While midst the chiefs that thus th' assault maintain,

Lo! some are wounded there, some here are slain.

Thus in discourse, the banquet of the mind, 395
 Their hunger fled, on carpets rich reclin'd,
 Beside the fount in bowery shades they lay,
 And careless pass'd the sultry hours away;
 While Malagigi, and while Vivian drest
 In shining steel, kept watch to guard the rest. 400

Now unaccompany'd behold a dame,
 With looks impatient, to the fountain came:
 Hippalca was she call'd, from whom the hand
 Of ruthless Rodomont Frontino gain'd:
 Him all the live-long day pursu'd the maid, 405
 With threats to move him, or with prayers persuade;

But when she found nor threats nor prayers succeed,
 Direct for Agrismont she bent her speed,

Ver. 391. *William of Monferrato*—] He means William the third marquis of Monferrato. He was rich in every accomplishment of mind and body, and gained many victories in France. He died in the flower of his age.

FORNARI.

Since

Since there she heard (but how, remains untold)
Rogero stay'd with Richardetto bold. 410

The place full well she knew, the ready way
As well she knew that near the fountain lay.
She came, and sudden there Rogero view'd;
But as Love's prudent envoy, well indu'd
With cautious thought, whatever chance might
fall,

And prompt to change at meet occasion's call; 416
Soon as her lady's brother she beheld,
She check'd her bridle, and her haste repell'd,
And midst the warriors coldly passing by,
On young Rogero cast a stranger's eye. 420

Then Richardetto rose to meet the dame,
And ask'd her whither bound, and whence she came.
She then with heavy cheer, and eyes yet red
From many a falling tear, thus, sighing, said;
But spoke so loud, that brave Rogero's ear, 425
Who stood beside, might every accent hear.

Late, at your sister's charge, o'er hill and plain
I led a generous courser by the rein,
In the swift race, and fields of battle prov'd,
Frontino call'd, and much the steed she lov'd. 430

She said; and scarcely thus her speech could close,
Ere, starting from his seat, Rogero rose, 450
And, turning swift to Richardetto, pray'd
(The sole reward he ask'd for welcome aid
But late bestow'd) that he alone might go,
And with the damsel seek her daring foe,
The haughty Saracen, whose lawless force 455
Had from her guidance reft the warrior horse.

Though Richardetto deem'd it ill became
A courteous champion, at another's claim,
To quit the deed that on his honour lay;
Yet, now compell'd, he gave unwilling way 460
To good Rogero's suit, who bade adieu,
And with Hippalca from the rest withdrew;
Who, left behind, all silent with amaze,
Scarce found a tongue his valorous acts to praise.

Meantime at distance now from listening ears, 465
Hippalca to th' impatient knight declares
Her tender greeting, in whose gentle breast
His matchless virtues ever liv'd imprest,
Which late before her faithful lips had told,
But Richardetto's sight her speech control'd: 470
She said, the Pagan, as he seiz'd the steed,
This vaunt had added to his lawless deed:

“ Since 'tis Rogero's, I more gladly make
 This courser mine, which, if he would retake,
 Tell him, whene'er he dares assert his right, 475
 I ne'er shall seek to hide me from his fight;
 That Rodomont am I—whose dauntless name,
 Where'er I go, my noble deeds proclaim.”

Rogero heard, and by his features show'd
 What deep resentment in his bosom glow'd: 480
 Frontino much he priz'd, and more he lov'd,
 As sent from her whose deeds her truth had prov'd:
 He deem'd this outrage done in foul despite,
 To stain the name and honour of a knight;
 And shame were his, unless his arm with speed 485
 From Rodomont redeem the generous steed,
 And on the Sarzan's head avenge th' ungentle deed.

The dame Rogero led with eager pace,
 To bring him with the Sarzan face to face:
 They journey'd till they reach'd a double way: 490
 One, down the plain; one, up the mountain lay;
 And either to the neighbouring valley brought,
 Where Rodomont with Mandricardo fought:
 Short was the uphill path, but rough to tread:
 Longer, but smooth, the path that downward led. 495

Hippalca took the first, in zeal to gain
The lost Frontino, and revenge obtain.
The king of Algiers, with the dwarf, the dame,
And Tartar knight, the way less rugged came.
These knights, who fought but late each other's life,
With Doralis, the lovely cause of strife, 501
In friendship rode, descending to the plain,
And reach'd the fountain where the noble train,
Where Malagigi, and where Vivian stay'd ;
Where Aldiger and Richardetto laid, 505 }
With bold Marphisa rested in the shade.

Marphisa, at each noble knight's request,
Had cloth'd her person in a female vest,
With rich attire and costly ornament,
By Bertolagi to Lanfusa sent ; 510
And though but rare appear'd the martial maid
Without her cuirass, helm and beamy blade ;
Yet, at their suit, she now her mail unbrac'd,
And shone a dame with every beauty grac'd.

Soon as the Tartar had Marphisa seen, 515
He purpos'd from her knights the dame to win,
And, in exchange for Doralis, bestow
Her youthful beauties on his rival foe,

As if the lover should such terms approve,
To sell a mistress, or transfer a love ! 520

With joy he view'd Marphisa's mien and face,
That worthy seem'd the bravest knight to grace;
And sudden every chief he there beheld

He call'd to joust, and dar'd them to the field.

Vivian and Malagigi, ready drest 525

In helmet, plate, and mail to guard the rest,

Upstart'd from their seats, prepar'd to fight

With each advancing chief; but Sarza's knight,

Who came not thither in the jousts to run,

Stood still, and left the champions one to one. 530

First Vivian, with a heart unus'd to fear,

Firm in the rest declin'd a ponderous spear:

The Pagan monarch with superior force

Appear'd well vers'd in every dreadful course:

Each aim'd his weapon, where he deem'd the blow 535

Might surest take—full on his helm the foe

From gallant Vivian's hand receiv'd the stroke;

But he nor fell, nor bow'd beneath the shock.

The Pagan king his tougher spear impell'd,

Which broke, like ice, the plates of Vivian's shield:

Hurl'd from his seat, amid the flowery way, 541

Stretch'd on his side the hapless warrior lay.

Then

Then Malagigi, rous'd at honour's call,
 In haste advanc'd t' avenge his brother's fall;
 But unadvis'd his haste—so ill he far'd, 545
 He less aveng'd him than his fortune shar'd.
 The third brave brother, eager for the fight,
 Before his kinsman on his courser light
 Leaps clad in arms, the Saracen defies,
 Throws up the reins, and to the trial flies. 550
 Fierce on the Pagan's temper'd helm, below
 The vizor's sight, resounds the forceful blow:
 Shiver'd in four, the spear to heaven ascends:
 Firm sits the knight, nor in the saddle bends.
 The Tartar champion, in the furious course, 555
 On Aldiger's left side with cruel force
 His weapon drove—The shield oppos'd in vain,
 And less the cuirass could the stroke sustain:
 Through his white shoulder pass'd the ruthless steel,
 And wounded Aldiger began to reel; 560
 Then falling, on the flowery turf lay spread,
 All pale his features, and his armour red!

Next Richardetto to th' encounter press'd,
 And coming, plac'd so huge a spear in rest,

Ver. 562. *All pale his features, &c.*] Literal from the Italian.
 Rosso fù l'arme e pallido nel volto.

And prov'd how justly (often prov'd before) 565
The name of Paladin of France he bore.

Well on the Pagan knight his spear he bent,
Had favouring fortune answer'd his intent,
But headlong on the ground he lay o'erthrown,
His falling courser's fault, and not his own. 570

No knight appearing more whose venturous hand
With Mandricardo in the joust might stand,
The Pagan deem'd his arms had won the dame,
And where she fate he near the fountain came,
And thus began—Thou, damsel, art my prize, 575
If in thy cause no other champion rise

To rein the steed—thy charms revert to me,
For so, thou know'st, the laws of arms decree.

Marphisa, raising with indignant pride
Her haughty looks—Thy judgment errs (she cry'd)
I grant the plea (nor should thy right decline) 581
That I by laws of war were justly thine;
Did I, of these thy spear to earth has thrown,
One for my lord, or for my champion own.

I own no lord, to none have subject been, 585
And he who wins me, from myself must win.
I wield the buckler, and the lance sustain,
And many a knight by me has press'd the plain.

My

My arms and steed !—The fiery virgin said,
And, at her word, the ready squires obey'd. 590
Stripp'd off her flowing robe, in vesture light
She stands with well-turn'd limbs reveal'd to fight;
Beauty and strength uniting in her frame,
All save her face the God of war proclaim.
And now with plate and mail encompass'd round, 595
Her sword she girts, and, with an active bound,
Bestrides her steed, which, govern'd by her hand,
Rears, turns, and wheels subservient to command.
Now boldly she the Pagan prince defies,
Wields her strong lance, and to th' encounter flies.
Penthesilea thus, in battle prov'd, 601
Through Trojan fields to meet Achilles mov'd.

Close to the grasp, like brittle glass, were rent
The crashing spears; but neither rider bent
One foot, one inch—then fir'd with generous rage,
To prove how well her daring foe could wage 606
A closer fight, Marphisa bar'd the sword,
And rush'd intrepid on the Tartar lord.
The Tartar, who the dame unhurt espies,
Blasphemes each element, and threatens the skies; 610
While she, who hop'd his shield to rend in twain,
Accuses heaven in no less angry strain.

Each

Each wields the gleaming sword, while batter'd
round,

Their jointed arms like beaten anvils found.

Alike in arms of fated steel attir'd, 615

Arms never more than on this day requir'd :

So strong the helm, the cuirass, plate, and greave,

No point could pierce them, and no edge could
cleave.

The strife had lasted till the setting light,

Nor yet th' ensuing day had clos'd the fight, 620

But Rodomont rush'd in their rage to stay,

And chide his rival for ill-tim'd delay.

If war thou seek'st (the king of Algiers cry'd)
First let us two our late dispute decide.

Thou know'st (he said) our truce was made to give

Our monarch succour, and his camp relieve ; 626

Nor must we, ere our friends are freed from harms,

Engage in jousts, or mix in fiercer arms.

Then to Marphisa, with a courteous air,

He turn'd, and shew'd the regal messenger, 630

And told her how from Agramant he came,

To ask their swords to save the Moorish name ;

And hop'd, at his request her valour won,

Would aid the cause of king Troyano's son :

By

By this 'twere better far, with generous aim, 635
 To lift to heaven the pinions of her fame,
 Than by low brawls defeat the great design,
 Against the common foe their strength to join.

Long had Marphisa wish'd, with sword and lance,
 To prove, in equal field, the peers of France, 640
 Who fought for Charles ; and hence the dame
 agreed }

To assist their sovereign at his greatest need,
 Till from the Christian powers the camp was freed. }

Meanwhile Rogero, with the guiding maid,
 The rugged path, that up the hill convey'd, 645
 Pursu'd in vain, for when the vale they gain'd,
 No longer there fierce Rodomont remain'd.

Rogero thence, to reach the fount that stood,
 By Merlin rais'd, with eager speed pursu'd
 The late-worn track that in the turf he view'd. 650 }

He will'd Hippalca then, without delay,
 Should Mount Albano seek, that distant lay
 A day's short journey—but a different road
 The traveller to Merlin's fountain show'd.

He bade her trust in him, nor trust in vain, 655
 His arm, ere long, Frontino would regain ;

To

To her he gave the tender lines to bear,
 Which late, at Agrismont, his anxious care
 Had penn'd to ease the dear expecting maid,
 And hither, in his breast conceal'd, convey'd. 660
 To this he added many a gentle charge,
 To speak his love, and plead his cause at large.
 All these Hippalca promis'd to retain;
 Then bade adieu, and turn'd her palfrey's rein.
 Swift on her way the trusty envoy goes, 665
 And Mount Albano fees at evening close.

Rogero then the Sarzan prince pursu'd,
 With anxious speed, till near the fount he view'd
 The king, with Mandricardo at his side,
 And Doralis in peace and friendship ride. 670
 Now to the place in haste Rogero drew,
 And by Frontino well his riderknew:
 Low o'er his spear the youth impatient bent,
 And to the chief a stern defiance sent:
 But less the suffering patience Job of old 675
 Display'd, so full in hallow'd pages told,
 Than Rodomont that day, who curb'd his pride,
 His wonted fury, when to fight defy'd.

Ver. 666. *And Mount Albano fees, &c.*] He returns to Hippalca,
 Book xxx. ver. 548.

Deaf to the combat ! he, whom danger's charms
Had ever fir'd, who joy'd to mix in arms ! 680
Ne'er till this day, nor since, the Sarzan knight
Was ever known to shun the proffer'd fight ;
So much the wish to aid his king distress'd,
The ruling passion of his soul suppress'd.
So fix'd he stood, that had his prescient mind 685
The certain issue of the strife divin'd,
As sure a prize, as when the leopard draws
The fearful hare within his ravenous paws,
Ev'n then his prudence had declin'd the fray,
Nor with a single blow prolong'd his stay. 690
Even that Rogero, who the battle claim'd,
That champion, high o'er other champions fam'd,
The man he wish'd to single from mankind,
And through the world had gladly rov'd to find,
Now fail'd to rouse him to the lifted plain ; 695
And him Achilles had provok'd in vain ;
So well his soul repress'd her wonted ire,
So deep in embers slept the smother'd fire.
He told Rogero why he shunn'd the fight,
And ask'd his aid to guard their sovereign's right, }
As well befeem'd a true and loyal knight. 701 }

The

The siege once rais'd, full leisure would remain,
Among themselves their quarrels to maintain.

I give consent (to him Rogero cry'd)
To cease awhile our battle to decide, 705
Till Agramant is freed from hostile power;
So thou to me Frontino first restore.

Say, would'st thou have me till the camp's release
Delay the combat and confirm the peace?
(The combat claim'd, to prove thy deed has stain'd
The name of knighthood, from a damsel's hand 711
To take my steed) Frontino now resign,
Else shall the powers of earth in vain combine
To make me for one hour the fight decline. }

While thus Rogero from the Sarzan's hands 715
Frontino, or the instant fight, demands;
And he, resolv'd, to neither will accede,
To give the battle, or restore the steed,
Lo! Mandricardo, on a different side,
New cause for contest in the field descry'd: 720
He sees, for his defence Rogero bear
The bird, that reigns o'er others prince of air,
The argent eagle in an azure shield,
Which once the Trojan knight* was seen to wield;

* HECTOR.

Which now Rogero challeng'd as his due, 725
Rogero, who his line from Hector drew.

Fierce Mandricardo at the fight inflam'd,
With anger rav'd to view the bird he claim'd
Usurp'd by other hands, and to his scorn,
On other shields great Hector's eagle borne. 730

Like him intrepid Mandricardo wore
The bird that Ganymede from Ida bore,
Such as he won it that tremendous day,
When at the magic dome he seiz'd the dazzling prey.

Known is the tale, how from the fairy's land, 735

This shield, with all the glorious arms, he gain'd,

Those arms by Vulcan forg'd, with skill divine,

To grace the knight of Priam's regal line.

For this before, in mutual strife engag'd,

Had Mandricardo and Rogero rag'd; 740

Why then the conflict ceas'd, I leave to tell,

Nor longer speak of what is known so well:

Thenceforth till now they never met in field,

But Mandricardo, when he view'd the shield,

Stept proudly forth, and, with a threatening cry—

Lo! here, Rogero, I thy force defy. 746

Ver. 734. *When at the magic dome, &c.:*] See note to Book xiv.
ver. 240. for the history of this adventure.

Thou dar'st for thy device my eagle take ;
 Nor is this day the first my claim I make :
 Think'st thou, as once my arm revenge forbore,
 I still shall pass thy usurpation o'er ? 750
 Since neither threats, nor gentle means addrest,
 Suffice to drive this folly from thy breast,
 Soon shall I prove thou better might'st have weigh'd
 The charge I gave, and in good time obey'd.

As in the crackling wood, when breath inspires
 The sudden blaze to wake the sleeping fires ; 756
 So to his ear when first the challenge came,
 Rogero's anger burst to instant flame.

Thou think'st t' o'erpower me now—(he cries en-
 rag'd)

But though another has my arms engag'd ; 760
 They soon shall win (thou to thy cost shalt see)
 From him Frontino, Hector's shield from thee.
 For this but late before I wag'd the strife,
 And late refrain'd to touch thy forfeit life.

Ver. 763. *For this but late before, &c.*] Boyardo tells us, that when first Rogero and Mandricardo met, a dispute ensued between them for this shield of Hector, which Mandricardo had won at the Fairy's castle.

ORL. INNAM. Book III. C. vi.

As

As then no weapon at thy side I view'd: 765
Those deeds were sport, but these must end in blood.
Ill fate for thee yon argent bird to bear,
Which thou usurp'st, and I with justice wear; }
Deliver'd down to me, the rightful heir.

'Tis thou usurp'st my right—and at the word, 770
Stern Mandricardo grasp'd his dreadful sword,
That sword, which once in fight Orlando drew,
And late in madness midst the forest threw.

Rogero then, whose unexampled mind
From courteous lore had never yet declin'd, 775
Soon as he saw his foe the falchion wield,
Let fall his spear as uselefs on the field.

His sword, good Balifarda, then with haste
His right hand seiz'd, his left the shield embrac'd;
But Rodomont between them spurr'd his steed: 780
Marphisa interpos'd with equal speed.

This, one; and that, the other knight repell'd;
By prayers implor'd them, and by force with-held;
While of the treaty Algiers' king complain'd,
By Mandricardo twice so ill maintain'd; 785
First, when to win Marphisa's charms, he mov'd
Against her knights, and well his valour prov'd;

And from Rogero now his shield to take,
Could thus the cause of Agramant forsake.
If strife thou seek'st—then let our swords (he cry'd)
A quarrel nobler far than these decide: 791
With thee the combat done, my dauntless hands
Shall answer him who now his steed demands:
If from my sword thy life survives the fight,
Thou may'st with him dispute the buckler's right.
Far other may the chance of arms provide. 796
To Rodomont (fierce Mandricardo cry'd)
When, like some fount, that ne'er its current drains,
My dauntless vigour unimpair'd remains,
To meet Rogero, or a thousand foes, 800
With all the world, should all the world oppose.

Words follow words, and wrath new wrath
supplies,
Now here, now there, increasing tumults rise.
Fell Mandricardo, whom new rage inflames,
With Rodomont, and with Rogero claims 805
At once the fight: unus'd affronts to bear,
Rogero spurns at peace, and breathes but war.
On either side Marphisa would restrain
The growing strife, that makes her labour vain.

As

As when, escaping from its broken shores, 811
The angry stream through various channels pours,
The peasant sees the waves the meads o'erflow,
And trembles for his promis'd crops below;
While here his cares against the flood provide,
Through other breaches bursts the founding tide: 815
Thus, while with Rodomont Rogero rag'd,
And Mandricardo in like strife engag'd;
Where each aspir'd, his brother-chiefs above,
Himself in courage, strength, and skill to prove,
Marphisa strove to calm each restless soul, 820
No words can soothe them, and no art control.
If one a moment from the fight she drew,
She saw the other chiefs th' assault renew.
The dame, who fought to calm each furious peer,
Thus spoke—Attend, my lords, my counsel hear:
O! let us yet these vain debates compose, 826
Till Agramant is freed from Christian foes.
If each will thus neglect his country's right,
Then I with Mandricardo claim the fight;
To prove how well (for such his boast has been) 830
He from myself in arms myself can win;
But if our king demands our better care,
Then let us hence, and every strife forbear.

Not one shall aid our king with readier speed
Than I—But let him first restore the steed, 835
(Rogero cry'd)—let him my words attend,
Restore the courser, or himself defend.
Here will I fall in glorious combat slain,
Or, with Frontino, victor quit the plain.
Then Rodomont—The first may well befall; 840
The last for other force than thine may call—
Then thus pursu'd—Hear, what I now protest,
If further ill betide our king distressed,
Yours be the blame, since here prepar'd I stand,
To act what duty and what fame demand. 845

Thus he—but little heedful of the word,
Rogero furious grasp'd his shining sword:
Like some wild boar with Rodomont he clos'd,
To shoulder shoulder, shield to shield oppos'd:
With sudden force the Sarzan prince he shook, 850
One foot the stirrup unawares forfok.
Defer the combat (Mandricardo cry'd)
Or if thou fight'st, with me thy arm be try'd.
He said, and now inflam'd with deeper spite,
Struck on the helmet of the youthful knight: 855
Low to his courser's neck Rogero bent,
Nor soon recovering rose, for swiftly sent

By

By Ulien's mighty son, the thundering steel,
With dreadful ruin on his head-piece fell :
Of adamantine proof his helm was made, 860
Else to his chin had cleft the reeking blade.
Rogero's hands unclos'd with sudden pain,
One lost the falchion, and one lost the rein ;
The startled courser bears him o'er the land,
And Balifarda glitters on the sand. 865

Marphisa, who that day in arms had stood
With brave Rogero, now the warrior view'd
By two at once in strife unequal prest,
And indignation fill'd her generous breast.
On Mandricardo, turning swift, she sped 870
Her unsheath'd falchion at the Tartar's head.
The king of Algiers on Rogero drives—
Frontino's won, unless some aid arrives.
But Richardetto and bold Vivian bring
Their friendly aid : while 'twixt the knight and king
That spurs his steed, and this with ready sword 876
Supplies Rogero, now to sense restor'd.
T'avenge his late disgrace Rogero burns,
And swift on Algiers' king indignant turns.
So when by chance some ox a lion gores 880
At unawares, the generous savage roars

With fury more than pain, while round he flings
His lashing tail, and swift to vengeance springs.
On Rodomont's proud head Rogero pour'd
A storm of blows, and had his own good sword 885
Then arm'd his hand, the Afric knight had found
His helm, though tough, too weak to ward the
wound ;

That helm, which once for Babel's king was wrought,
When with the stars an impious war he fought.
Discord, who now beholds with joyful eyes 890
Strife follow strife, on tumult tumult rise ;
Exults that contest never more could cease,
By truce suspended, or compos'd by peace ;
Secure of ill, her sister Pride she calls,
With her to seek again the cloister'd walls. 895

But let them hence —while we attend the fight,
Where, on the forehead of the Sarzan knight,
Rogero drove his weighty blade so well,
That backward on his steed the rider fell ;
His harden'd scales behind, his haughty crest,
And clanking helm, Frontino's crupper press'd ; 901
While thrice, and four times, here and there he
reel'd,

And seem'd just falling on the grassy field :

Nor

Nor had his open'd grasp the sword retain'd,
But that a chain secur'd it to his hand. 905

With Mandricardo fierce Marphisa wag'd
A dreadful fight, that all his force engag'd.
Not less the Tartar fought with temper'd charms;
Their corslets well secur'd each breast from harms, }
And either equal seem'd in strength and arms. 910 }

At length Marphisa's courser wheeling round
In narrow circuit on the slippery ground,
Fell sidelong down, and while to rise he strove,
Fierce Mandricardo Brigliadoro drove
Against his flank, forgetting knightly lore, 915
And low to earth the struggling courser bore,

With grief Rogero saw the warrior-maid
In evil plight, nor long his help delay'd:
His arm at freedom, while the Sarzan foe
Was senseless from his late inflicted blow. 920

On Mandricardo swift the sword he sped,
The well-aim'd stroke had cleft the Tartar's head,
With Balifarda had his hand been arm'd,
Or the fierce Tartar's helm less strongly charm'd.
The king of Algiers, now recovering, view'd 925
Young Richardetto, whom he saw intrude

With daring aid the combat to molest,
 When late his powerful arm Rogero prefs'd.
 To him he turn'd, and came full well prepar'd,
 His deeds of good with evil to reward: 930
 But Malagigi, deep in magic taught,
 A strange device to save his kinsman wrought.
 Though wanting here his book, whose potent force
 Could stop the sun in his meridian course,
 His mem'ry yet those awful words retain'd, 935
 Which the foul demons at his will restrain'd:
 On Doralis he prov'd his magic flight,
 And in her beast convey'd a subtle spright:
 The beast, that Stordilano's daughter bore,
 Receiv'd th' infernal angel, which the power 940
 Of Vivian's brother from the realms of hell,
 Where Minos sits, had drawn by fated spell.
 The palfrey, late so gentle to command,
 That only mov'd by her directing hand,
 The sudden impulse of the demon found, 945
 And thrice ten feet he vaulted from the ground;
 A dreadful leap! yet though he seem'd to fly,
 The fair one kept her seat, while from on high,
 Trembling for life she gave a fearful cry.

Now

Now lighting on his feet, the frantic steed 950

Runs as the spirit drives, with furious speed;
He bears the damsel, shrieking with affright,
And leaves behind the feather'd arrow's flight.

Rouz'd at her voice, the son of Ulien stays
His arm from combat, and the fair surveys. 955

The fair he follows, rapid as the wind,
And Mandricardo spurs as swift behind.

The Tartar bent no more, with hostile arm,
To work Rogero or Marphisa harm,
Awaits not truce or peace, but where he views 960
Stern Rodomont and Doralis, pursues.

Meantime Marphisa from the earth arose,
(With rage and shame her generous bosom glows)
And burning for revenge, too late beheld
The Tartar champion distant on the field. 965

Rogero, when he sees th' unfinish'd fray,
Roars like a lion baffled of his prey.
Both knew 'twas vain to chace, with either steed,
Good Brigliadoro or Frontino's speed.
Rogero deem'd disgrace must stain his name, 970

In his Frontino to renounce the claim
The list untry'd—nor will Marphisa rest,
Till prov'd in fight the Tartar breast to breast.

The

The martial virgin and the knight agree
To follow those on whom they wish'd to see 975
Their full revenge, and, if unfound before,
They hop'd to find them with the Turkish power;
Where, lest the siege might work the Pagans woe,
The knights would haste t' attack the Christian foe.

Rogero, ere he yet his friends forfook, 980
A courteous leave of every warrior took;
And back returning to the fountain, came
Where the lov'd brother of his beauteous dame
Remain'd apart; to him the gentle knight
Firm friendship vows, in good or evil plight; 985
Then to his sister, by the youth, conveys
Fair thoughts and greeting, couch'd in cautious
phrase;

Such cautious phrase, as may her fears remove,
But no suspicion wake of secret love.

To Malagigi, Vivian, then in few, 990
To wounded Aldiger he bids adieu:
While these, with good Rogero, change no less
The grateful farewell, and their thanks express,
Again renew'd, with future service vow'd,
For ever due to aid so well bestow'd. 995

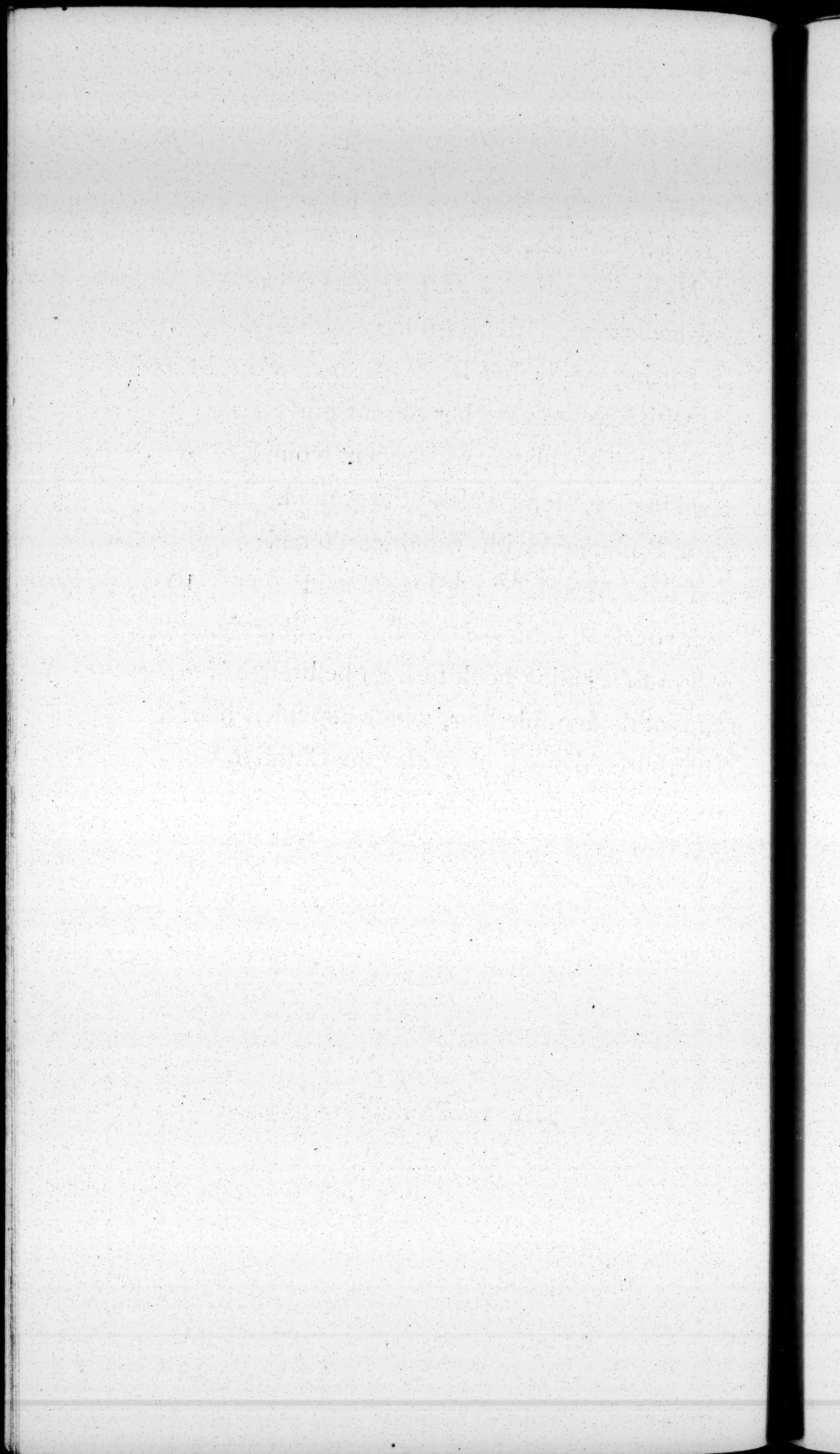
Ver. 995—*aid so well bestow'd.*] Alluding to the delivery of
Vivian and Malagigi, Book xxvi.

Marphisa,

Marphisa, eager Paris' walls to find,
Scarce bent a thought on those she left behind :
But Malagigi and good Vivian, prest
By friendly zeal, with distant signs address'd
The parting maid : her Richardetto view'd, 1000
And with like greeting her retreat pursu'd ;
While hapless Aldiger, with recent wound,
Unwilling lay, reclin'd along the ground.

First Rodomont with Mandricardo fled ;
Next these Marphisa and Rogero sped 1005
Their course to Paris—deeds transcending thought,
Shall in th' ensuing book to light be brought ;
Deeds of those noble four, whose matchless hands,
With rout and death o'erthrew the Christian bands.

Ver. 1002. *While hapless Aldiger—*] We hear no more of Aldiger in this poem:



THE
TWENTY-SEVENTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

RODOMONT and Mandricardo, following Doralis, are drawn near the Christian forces, where they are met by Gradasso and Sacripant, and all together fall upon the camp of Charles. Rogero and Marphisa arriving next, join them in the attack. Great slaughter of the Christians, who are compelled to retire within the walls of Paris. The archangel Michael finds out Discord in the monastery, and sends her again to the Pagans. Dissentions renewed amongst the leaders. Agramant commands that the contending knights should draw lots for the order of the combat. The first lot falls on Rodomont and Mandricardo. Preparations for the lists. While the knights are arming, a debate arises between Sacripant and Mandricardo for the sword Durindana. Rogero again asserts his claim to the shield of Hector. Agramant and Marfilius endeavour to pacify them. Another quarrel breaks out between Rodomont and Sacripant for the horse Frontino, which is likewise claimed by Rogero. Brunello is forcibly carried off by Marphisa in the face of Agramant and his whole court. Agramant persuades Rodomont and Mandricardo to refer their title to Doralis to her own decision: they agree, and Doralis decides in favour of Mandricardo. Rodomont leaves the camp with indignation. His invective against women. He is received and hospitably entertained by a country host.

THE
TWENTY-SEVENTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

A MIDST the various gifts by heaven assign'd,
With special grace to enrich the female kind,
Be this the praise, where most the sex aspires,
To counsel well when sudden need requires:
But seldom man mature advice supplies, 5
When time the means of long debate denies:
Good Malagigi wrought with fair intent,
And well it seem'd, but different was th' event:
For while he kept, by force of magic charms,
His kinsman Richardetto safe from harms, 10
The fiend, obedient to his potent word,
Convey'd the Tartar* prince and Sarzan lord

* MANDRICARDO and RODOMONT.

To distance far ; nor then the sage foreknew,
 What mischief hence on Christian Charles he drew.
 Had time allow'd him leisure to reflect, 15
 Some safer means had offer'd to protect
 His kinsman's life, nor would, in evil hour,
 His spells have thus distress the Christian power :
 Some wiser arts the demon had constrain'd,
 To bear to furthest east or western land 20
 Th' affrighted dame, for France no more to view,
 Where both the lovers might her flight pursue.
 But that malignant fiend, man's endless foe,
 By heaven's high justice doom'd to realms of woe,
 Contriv'd what most the faithful would dismay, 25
 Since his dread master ne'er prescrib'd his way.

The palfrey with the hidden demon, held
 His rapid flight ; no crossing stream repell'd
 His bounding course ; nor woods' entangled shade,
 Nor fen, nor cliff, nor rock, his speed delay'd : 30

Ver. 26. *Since his dread master—*] Since Malagigi had not prescribed the rout which the demon was to take, but left him to his own disposal, he took that course with the damsel which would draw Mandricardo and Rodomont towards the Christian camp, and consequently bring distress on Charlemain.

Till

Till through the Franks and English camps he bore
(And all the unnumber'd host that Christ adore)

Th' affrighted dame, and safely had restor'd
To her lov'd fire Granada's royal lord.

Meanwhile the son of Agrican purfu'd 35

The flying fair, and soon no longer view'd :

With him was Ulien's son, but either knight

Had lost her image from his straining fight :

Yet, by the track, they follow'd still the chace,

As nimble hounds the goat or leveret trace : 40

Till either lover certain tidings gain'd,

That with her fire the princely dame remain'd.

Take heed, O Charles!—What clouds thy sky
deform!

Hang o'er thy head, and threat the bursting storm !

Not these alone, but king Gradasso stands 45

With Sacripant, prepar'd to assault thy bands ;

While fortune, to complete thy ruin'd state,

Has robb'd thee of each glorious lamp, that late,

Of strength and wisdom beam'd thy purest light,

And leaves thee now in long enduring night. 50

Ver. 45.—*king Gradasso.*] The last we heard of Gradasso was at the enchanted palace of Atlantes, Book xii. from which place all the knights were released by Astolpho.

Orlando now, estrang'd to every thought
 Of good or evil, roves with wit distraught,
 O'er hill and plain, unhous'd and naked lies
 In heat or cold, in fair or stormy skies!
 Rinaldo, scarce with better sense inspir'd, 55
 Has left his prince, when aid was most requir'd,
 Of fair Angelica the news to gain,
 In Paris lately fought, but fought in vain:
 An aged hermit, vers'd in magic art,
 (As once I told) had play'd a fraudulent part; 60
 And wrought th' unwary knight to fond belief,
 That she, so lov'd, was won by Brava's * chief.
 At this, with jealous rage and grief distress'd,
 That ne'er before a lover's heart oppress'd;
 He enter'd Paris walls, then voyag'd o'er 65
 (So chance decreed) to Britain's distant shore.
 The battle fought, in which such fame he won,
 The Moors besieg'd and freed the regal town,
 Paris again he view'd; each covert there,
 And every dome explor'd with fruitless care; 70

* ORLANDO.

Ver. 59. *An aged hermit—*] See Book ii. ver. 89. where the hypocritical hermit deceives Rinaldo and Sacripant with a lying vision, and parts the battle between the two rivals.

Ver. 67. — *such fame he won, &c.*] See Books xvi. xvii. and seq.

He

He deem'd, with Brava's chief, the lovely maid
To Brava or Anglante's feats convey'd :
Now pass'd the hours ; and thither hastes the knight ;
But there nor chief nor damsel meets his fight ;
And thence to Paris walls he turns anew, 75
In hopes, ere long, the Paladin to view :
No Paladin he views : with rage he burns :
Again to Brava and Anglante turns.
Alike he journeys on by night or day,
In morn's cool breeze, or noon-tide's sultry ray ; 80
And many a time one path repeated tries,
The sun or moon, by turns, its light supplies.

But he, our ancient foe, through whom the hand
Of hapless Eve transgress'd the high command,
With livid eyes imperial Charles beheld, 85
What time vain love had from the camp expell'd
Albano's knight : he mark'd with horrid joy,
What force might then the Christian powers annoy ;

And now together brought against their host,
The flower of arms the Pagan world could boast. 90
He fires the king Gradasso, fires the breast
Of noble Sacripant ; who, since releas'd

From old Atlantes' castle, where they shar'd
 One common error, had companions far'd
 Along the way: he these incites to aid 95
 Their sovereign Agramant, and Charles invade.
 Himself, by secret ways, their course attends,
 And safely brings to join their Pagan friends.
 Another fiend he bids with trusty speed,
 Fierce Rodomont and Mandricardo lead, 100 }
 Where late the demon urg'd the damsel's steed.
 A third he sent, that to the Pagan crew,
 Valiant Rogero and Marphisa drew;
 Nor yet so swiftly to the camp they pass'd,
 But of the six, these two arriv'd the last. 105

Th' infernal angel who relentless fought
 The Christian's loss, this subtle train had wrought,

Ver. 94. — *had companions far'd*] This seems to be a little slip of the poet's memory, as Sacripant and Gradasso did not leave the palace of Atlantes together; for Sacripant (see Book xii. ver. 220.) when the ring had dispelled the illusion that so long detained him, had quitted the palace with Orlando and Ferrau, and followed the flight of Angelica; but it appears (See Book xxii. ver. 141.) that Gradasso remained behind in the enchanted palace with Rogero, Bradamant, Iroldo, and others, till the enchantment was dissolved by Astolpho. Of this oversight of the poet the Italian commentators have taken no notice.

Left

Left with Rogero Rodomont arriv'd,
The late contention for the steed reviv'd
Should cross his great design, for either knight 110
Might then renew his undecided fight.

The first brave warrior that together join'd,
Beheld in distant prospect to the wind
The banners wave, and saw the tents ascend,
Where those besiege the works, and these defend. 115

And now, the counsel held, the dauntless four,
In spite of Charles, and all his numerous power,
To raise the siege, with joint consent agree,
And Agramant from threatening ruin free.
Compact and firm they bend their daring way, 120
Where deep encamp'd the Christian army lay;
While Africa and Spain aloud they cry,
Now Pagans known to every ear and eye.

Through all the host, to arms to arms, resound
A thousand tongues; but ere their arms they found,
The hostile steel invades them unprepar'd, 126
And the first onset puts to flight the guard.

The Christian chiefs, while thus the tumult spread,
Scarce knew from whom, or why their foldiers fled:
Some deem'd this daring insult they sustain 130
From the fierce Swiss or hardy Gascon train:

But, while uncertain whence th' incursion came,
They call the troops of every clime and name.
Loud beats the drum; the trump its clangor pours;
The sky re-echoes, and the tumult roars! 135
Imperial Charles, amidst his gathering bands,
All, save his helmet, arm'd, intrepid stands.
He calls his Paladins, and bids them tell,
What sudden force could thus his legions quell.
By threats now these, now those he stays from flight,
And others he beholds (too cruel fight!) 141
With heads dissever'd by the furious blade,
With bosoms pierc'd, and bowels open laid;
While some return (escap'd from greater harms)
With bleeding limbs, with sever'd hands and arms. 145
Advancing still, he sees where, scatter'd round,
Unnumber'd wretches gasping bite the ground;
Dreadful to view! all weltering in their gore,
When leech or drugs shall ne'er avail them more.
Where'er this little band resistless came, 150
They left eternal monuments of fame;
While Charles with wonder, grief, and shame, beheld
The fearful carnage of so dire a field.
So one, who suffers by the thunder's force,
Explores the track of its destructive course. 155
These

These noble four the tents had scarcely gain'd,
Where Afric's monarch still entrench'd remain'd;
When on a different side, th' assault to aid,
Appear'd Rogero and the martial maid*.
Soon as the generous pair had darted round 160
Their skilful fight, to mark the camp and ground;
And saw how best the combat to maintain,
And raise the siege; they gave their steeds the rein.
As, when the mine is fir'd, the straining eyes
Scarce view the flame as through the train it flies, 165
'Till bursting forth, the fury levels all,
Tears the firm rock, and shakes the strongest wall.
So swift Rogero and Marphisa flew,
Such was their rage amongst the warring crew.
Assant, direct, their furious blows they dealt; 170
Dissever'd scalps, lopt arms, and shoulders felt
The trenchant steel, while, for escape too slow,
Huge crowds divide before each gallant foe.
Whoe'er has seen o'er hill or vale a storm
Sweep fiercely on, with ruin part deform, 175
Part leave unhurt, may judge how, scatter'd wide,
This warlike couple pierc'd the martial tide.

* MARPHISA.

Those, who from Rodomont's destructive hand
 Had fled, and 'scap'd the first assailing band 179
 Of four such warriors, gave their thanks to heaven,
 That strength and swiftness to their feet had given.
 But now with weapons brandish'd at their breast,
 By bold Rogero and Marphisa prest,
 They see too late that him who stands or flies,
 What fate has sentenc'd, fate to shun denies. 185
 New danger follows one already past,
 Who 'scapes the first, must doubly pay the last.
 So fares it with the timorous fox, expell'd
 From ancient seats which once she safely held;
 Whom for her thefts the village hinds conspire, 190
 To chace with vapour of the smouldering fire,
 Driv'n with her cubs upon the hound to run,
 And meet that death she hop'd in vain to shun.

At length Marphisa and Rogero gain
 The inmost trenches, whom the Pagan train 195
 Joyful receive with eyes on Heaven intent,
 In grateful thanks for aid so timely sent.
 No longer fear the meanest bosom knows,
 Each Pagan arm defies a hundred foes;

Ver. 180. *Of four such warriors—*] Rodomont, Mandricardo,
 Gradasso and Sacripant, who first attacked the camp of the Christians,
 and were afterwards joined by Rogero and Marphisa.

With

With one united voice, their chiefs they call, 200

And burn with ardor on the camp to fall.

The Moorish drum, the horn and timbrel blend

Their rattling sounds that to the skies ascend:

While streamers rais'd aloft, and banners join'd,

With mix'd devices tremble in the wind. 205

Not less the chiefs of Charles, with martial care

The troops of Brittany and France prepare:

With these Italian, German, English, close

Their martial lines, and fierce the battle glows!

Stern Rodomont, of unresisted might, 210

With Mandricardo, dreadful in the fight:

Noble Rogero (virtue's constant stream)

And king Gradasso, every nation's theme:

Marphisa steel'd in arms, and with her join'd

Circassia's* prince, who never lagg'd behind; 215

All these at once the king of France assail'd,

And urg'd his vows, that nothing now avail'd.

On John and Dennis (patron saints) he calls,

But soon compell'd, retires to Paris' walls.

Th' o'erbearing valour of this matchless train 220

(The knights and dame), the muse, my lord! in vain

Attempts to paint, nor can describe in speech,

What beggars fancy, and no words can reach.

* SACRIPANT.

Think then what numbers fell of life bereav'd,
What loss that day unhappy Charles receiv'd! 225
With these Ferrau demands his share of fame,
And with him many a Moor of gallant name;
For haste, what numbers in the Seine were lost,
The bridge unequal for the flying host!
Some wish, like Icarus, for wings to soar 230
From death, that threats behind and threats before.
What hapless Paladins were then enslav'd!
Vienna's marquis*, and Ugero fav'd
Alone from bonds: see Olivero stand,
Near his right shoulder by a hostile hand 235
The wound inflicted deep, while at his side
Ugero's head pours forth a purple tide.
If, like Rinaldo or Orlando lost,
Brave Brandimart had left the Christian host,
In exile then might Charles have led his life, 240
Had fortune giv'n him to survive the strife.
Whate'er cool thought or strength of nerve supply'd,
Intrepid Brandimart had vainly try'd;
Till forc'd at length to give the tempest way,
Slow he recedes, and scarce resigns the day. 245

* OLIVERO,

Thus Agramant propitious Fortune view'd,
 And once again the siege of Charles renew'd.
 The cries of orphans, and the widows' moans,
 Sons for their fathers, fathers for their sons,
 From earth ascending reach'd th' empyreal height,
 Where Michael fate in realms of purest light. 251
 He heard; and looking down with sad survey,
 Beheld, the food of wolves and birds of prey,
 Stretch'd in their blood by thousands on the plain,
 Of every nation his lov'd people slain. 255

The blessed angel blush'd celestial red,
 To find his great Creator ill obey'd:
 To Discord late he gave his high command,
 To kindle strife amidst the Pagan band;
 Far different now, he sees the Pagans' hate 260
 All firmly join'd against the Christian state.
 As when some faithful envoy, who at large
 Receives commission for a weighty charge,
 Chides his neglect, recalling to his thought
 Some valu'd purpose, midst his zeal forgot, 265

Ver. 256. *The blessed angel blushed celestial red*] Thus Milton
 makes his angel change colour,

To whom the angel, with a smile that glow'd
 Celestial rosy red——

PARADISE LOST, B. viii. ver. 618.

And,

And, ere he fees his lord, with eager care
Bends every power th' omission to repair:
The angel thus will not to GOD ascend,
Till future deeds his error past amend.
To where before in hallow'd cloisters plac'd, 270
He Discord met, he ply'd his wings in haste:
Again he found, where midst the monks she fate,
And at a chapter urg'd the dire debate:
Pleas'd with their strife she view'd with joyful eye,
Cast at each other, prayers and masses fly. 275
With holy wrath the heavenly angel burn'd,
Her by the locks he seiz'd, and seizing spurn'd;
Then in his hand a crozier swift he took,
And on her head, her arms, and shoulder, broke.
Mercy! ah, mercy!—(loud the fury yell'd, 280
While close the heavenly nunciate's knees she held)
But Michael set not yet the fiend at large,
Till to the Saracens, with weighty charge,
He thus dismiss'd her—Hence! nor more forsake
Yon hostile camp my heavier wrath to wake. 285
Though Discord, sorely bruis'd with back and breast
The livid marks of many a stripe confess'd,
Yet trembling more with fear of future harm,
From the strong power of that angelic arm;

Her

Her bellows swift she seiz'd with kindled fire, 290
And store of fuel that might well conspire
T' increase the flame, with which her ruthless art
Lights up fell strife, that rankling in the heart,
To Rodomont and Mandricardo spread,
With good Rogero: these the fury led 295
Before the king, for now each peril o'er
From Christian foes, their legions fear'd no more }
A new assault from Charles' defeated power.

Their quarrels told, each to the monarch shows
The causes whence their late dissensions rose, 300
And begg'd his voice the contest to decide,
By whom in arms their claims should first be try'd.
Marphisa with the rest attention won,
Eager to end her combat late begun,
Which first the Tartar urg'd; nor would she yield 305
A day, an hour, her title to the field;
But with a generous warmth enforc'd her right,
To meet with instant arms the Tartar knight.
Not less would Rodomont conclude the strife,
That to himself or rival gives the wife; 310
The mighty strife, by joint consent delay'd,
To give their friendly camp and sovereign aid.

Rogero

Rogero would annul his claim, and vow'd
That ill his honour Rodomont allow'd
From him the steed unjustly to detain, 315
And not in battle first the deed maintain.
More to perplex their broils the Tartar knight
Stept forth, and loud deny'd Rogero's right
To bear the bird with silver wings display'd:
And, as he spoke, such rage his bosom sway'd, 320
He dar'd the three at once to combat call,
By one sole trial to determine all:
Alike the rest in mingled fight had clos'd,
But that the king his high commands oppos'd.

King Agramant, that further strife may cease, 325
With prayers and soothing words entreats the peace;
In vain he soothes and prays—with deafen'd ear,
Each knight refuses peace or truce to hear:
And now his thoughts suggest the warriors' names
Inscrib'd on lots shall fix their several claims: 330
He bids four scrolls the written names disclose:
One Rodomont, and Mandricardo shows:
With Mandricardo one Rogero bears:
Rodomont with Rogero one declares:
One Mandricardo with Marphisa joins: 335
These to be drawn, as fickle chance inclines,

The

The king commands ; and lo ! the first that came
Bore Sarza's king * and Mandricardo's name.
Next, with Rogero Mandricardo stood :
Rodomont and Rogero third were view'd : 340
Last, Mandricardo with Marphisa join'd ;
Which fore displeas'd the martial virgin's mind.
Not better pleas'd his lot Rogero saw,
Left he *, decreed the foremost chance to draw, 344
Should wage such conflict with the Tartar knight,
Marphisa and himself might lose their right }
To meet the son of Agrican in fight.

Not far from Paris' walls a tract of ground
Was seen, a little mile in compass round ;
Where, in theatric guise, the feats dispos'd, 350
With gentle rise a middle space enclos'd.
There once a castle stood, but now o'erthrown
By wars and time no more the place was known.
The lifts were here design'd ; with busy care 354
The workmen clear'd the ground and form'd a square
Of large extent, and fenc'd on either hand,
With two wide gates, as ancient rites demand ;
And at the barrier's end, the lifts to close,
On either side a fair pavilion rose.

* RODOMONT.

Now came the day, when swords must fix the right,
Nam'd by the king, and wish'd by either knight: 361
Plac'd in the tent that to the west appears,
His giant limbs the king of Algiers rears,
There bold Ferrau and Sacrifiant assist,
With scaly hide to arm him for the list: 365
And where the eastern gate its valves expands,
With king Gradasso Falsirones stands,
These for the son of Agrican * employ
Their aid, to deck him with the arms of Troy.
High on a lofty throne, in royal state, 370
The king of Spain and king of Afric fate:
Next Stordilano and the peers were plac'd
Above the rest, in rank and honours grac'd.
Happy is he who on some rising height,
Or tufted tree can sit to view the fight! 375
Great is the press, and deep on every side,
Through all the camp, was pour'd the mingled tide.
Castilia's queen was present; many a queen
And princess fair, with noble dames were seen,
From Aragon, Castile, Granada's land, 380
And near the bound where Atlas' pillars stand.
There Stordilano's daughter, with the rest,
Appears in robes of various colour dress'd:

* MANDRICARDO.

One vest was green, and one a paly red
Of soften'd dye, like roses newly shed: 385

A garb Marphisa wore, that might proclaim
(Succinct and simple) both the knight and dame.

Like her apparell'd, near Thermodöon's flood,
Hippolyta with all her virgins stood.

Already in his coat of arms array'd, 390

That royal Agramant's device display'd,

The herald enter'd, in the list to draw

The bounds prescrib'd, and state the duel's law.

While now impatient throngs demand the fight,

While oft their murmurs chide, and oft invite 395

Each tardy champion; sudden in their ear

From Mandricardo's tent a noise they hear,

Loud and more loud, deriv'd from wrathful words

Between the Sericane and Tartar lords.

Soon as the king of Sericane had drest 400

The Tartar monarch in his martial vest,

He stood prepar'd to gird the sword, which, try'd

In battle oft, had grac'd Orlando's side,

When DURINDANA on the hilt he views,

And that device Almontes wont to use, 405

From whom, long since, beside a limpid brook,

This sword, while yet a youth, Orlando took.

He saw, and knew full well the famous sword,
That arm'd the hand of great Anglante's lord;
Which prize to gain he left his native shore, 410
With such a force as ne'er was seen before;
And, some few years elaps'd, Castilia view'd,
And France itself beneath his arms subdu'd.
He marvell'd now, by what strange means obtain'd
He saw this sword in Mandricardo's hand, 415
Then ask'd what chance had given the fatal blade,
And when and where he from the earl convey'd
The precious prize—The Tartar prince reply'd:
Erewhile in fight Orlando's force I try'd:
At length he feign'd a madness to conceal 420
His dastard feelings, for he knew too well,
While this he wore, he still his trembling life
With me must risk in never-ending strife.
The beaver thus, who sees the woodland crew
Near and more near his hunted steps pursue, 425
Well conscious what they seek, behind him leaves
The sought-for treasure, and his life reprieves.

Ere yet he ceas'd, Gradasso took the word:
To thee, nor any, will I yield the sword.
Justly I claim what long I toil'd to gain, 430
My gold expended and my people slain!

Some

Some other weapon seek—nor deem it strange
 That this I challenge——let Orlando range
 Frantic or wild, where'er this sword I hold,
 The sword is mine—thou, as thyself hast told, 435
 Found'st it far distant from its owner thrown,
 But, found by me, I claim it for my own.
 This falchion shall the right I plead maintain—
 The list shall be my judge—prepare to gain 439
 This sword by force, if this thou seek'st in fight, }
 To wield on Rodomont; since every knight }
 Who uses arms, should win them by his might. }

At this the Tartar rais'd his daring head :
 What sweeter sound can reach my ears (he said)
 Than aught that speaks of war?—But first, in field,
 To thee his turn the Sarzan prince must yield. 446
 Procure with me the foremost fight to wage,
 And let the second Rodomont engage :
 Doubt not I stand prepar'd for thee—for all—
 To answer thine and every mortal call. 450

Rogero then increasing strife to breed :
 Think not t' infringe the terms so late agreed.
 Be Rodomont the first in list to join,
 Or, if he change, his fight must follow mine.

Grant what Gradasso pleads, that in the field 455
A knight must win his arms who arms would wield.
Shalt thou my bird with argent wings display,
Till from my grasp thou rend'st the shield away?
Lo! here I stand t' abide the lot's decree;
The first to Rodomont—the next to me! 460
If thou persist our treaty to confound,
I spurn all order, and despise all bound:
Nor will I for a moment wave my right,
But call thee forth this instant to the fight.
Let each of you be Mars, (then made reply 465
Fierce Mandricardo) each his prowess try:
What arm shall dare forbid me here to wield
The trusty falchion or the glorious shield?
Then fir'd to wrath, with steely gauntlet bent,
At Sericana's king a stroke he sent, 470
Whose better hand at unawares it took,
And Durindana strait his grasp forfook.
Gradasso, bursting then with rage, beheld
The sword disputed from his hand compell'd.
Indignant shame, despite, and burning ire, 475
Flush'd all his face; his eyeballs sparkled fire:
Fierce for revenge a backward step he made,
And stood in act to draw the deadly blade:

But

But Mandricardo, ever unappall'd,
Him and Rogero to the battle call'd. 480
Come, both at once—come, Rodomont! (he cry'd)
To make the third, and come all three defy'd.
Come, Spain and Afric! all of human race,
No flight shall e'er my glories past disgrace.
Thus he who nothing fear'd; and as he spoke, 485
In his right hand Almontes' weapon shook,
Firmly embrac'd his shield, for fight prepar'd,
And good Rogero and Gradasso dar'd.
Leave him to me, and soon this sovereign steel,
(Exclaims Gradasso) shall his frenzy heal. 490
Not so (Rogero cries) to me resign
Yon boasting chief—the combat first is mine.
Go thou—the fight is mine—by turns they cry'd—
Then all at once each other loud defy'd.
Nor this nor that would yield; and now enrag'd 495
All three at once a medley war had wag'd;
When numbers present as the warriors clos'd,
With ill advice amidst them interpos'd;
And to their cost had soon his fortune known,
Who for another's safety risks his own: 500
Not all the world their souls to peace had won,
But lo! the Spanish monarch, with the son

Of great Troyano came, whose presence quell'd
Their frantic rage, and each in reverence held.

Now Agramant demands, what sudden cause 505
To new contention thus each warrior draws.
Th' occasion known, he strives with every art
To calm the rage of stern Gradasso's heart;
That he to Mandricardo might afford
One single day the loan of Hector's sword, 510 }
Till the dire fight was wag'd with Sarza's lord.

While Agramant with soothing words addrest,
Assays by turns t' appease each angry breast,
New sounds of tumult in the western tent,
From Rodomont and Sacripant were sent. 515
Circasia's monarch stood with Sarza's knight,
(As late we told) to arm him for the fight,
And with Ferrau had on the champion brac'd
Those arms which once his proud forefather grac'd.
And now they came to where the courser stood, 520
Who dash'd around the whitening foam, and chew'd
The golden bit: this steed, Frontino nam'd,
Was that whose loss Rogero's wrath inflam'd.
Meanwhile the generous Sacripant, whose care
Must such a champion for the list prepare, 525

Observ'd the gallant steed with nearer view,
 When soon his marks and faultless limbs he knew,
 And own'd his Frontaletto, for whose sake
 He went on foot, nor other steed would take :
 Stol'n by Brunello, on that fatal day, 530
 When from the fair* he bore her ring away ;
 When Balifarda and his horn he reft
 From great Anglante's earl with impious theft ;
 When from her side Marphisa's sword he bore,
 And with his plunder reach'd Biferta's shore ; 535
 Then gave Rogero Balifarda fam'd,
 With this good courser, since Frontino nam'd.
 Each certain proof the fierce Circassian weigh'd,
 Then turning to the Sarzan king, he said :
 Know, chief! this steed is mine—by fraud pur-
 loin'd 540
 Before Albracca—numbers left behind
 Could witness what I tell—behold my sword
 Shall full conviction of the truth afford.
 But since together for awhile we far'd
 In friendly fort, and mutual converse shar'd ; 545

* ANGELICA.

Ver. 532.—*his horn bereft*—] This horn was won by Or-
 lando from Almontes, when he slew him at the fountain. See
 ASPRAMONT.

And since thy want I know—to thee I yield
My generous courser for the listèd field,
My right acknowledge first ; else hope in vain
To keep a steed which only arms can gain.

Stern Rodomont, than whom no prouder knight
E'er wielded weapon in the list of fight, 551

Thus answer'd—Had another's lips declar'd
Such ill-judg'd words as Sacripant has dar'd,
He to his cost might find 'twere better far,
That speechless born he breath'd the vital air ; 555

But as thou urgest, for the friendship late
Between us held, in this I wave debate,
To bid thee now (and heed what I advise)
Defer awhile thy arduous enterprize,
Till thou hast mark'd the issue of the fight, 560

This day, between me and the Tartar knight,
When his example shall thy prudence wake,
To beg me as thy gift this steed to take.

With thee 'tis courteous to be brutal (cries
Fierce Sacripant, with lightening in his eyes) 565

But mark me plainer now—henceforth take heed
How far thou dar'st usurp my trusty steed :

I here forbid thee, while this better hand
Can, grasp'd aloft, the vengeful sword command.

If other means should fail, unarm'd I fight, 570
And stand with tooth and nail to guard my right.

Cries, threats succeed, and ire enkindles ire :
Less swift through stubble runs the blaze of fire.
Fierce Rodomont complete his armour wears,
But Sacripant nor helm nor cuirass bears, 575

Yet seems (so well he knew his sword to wield)
Securely fenc'd as with a covering shield :
Though Rodomont excell'd in nerve of fight,
No less in skill excell'd Circassia's knight. 579

Not with more swiftnefs turns the kindling wheel,
When from the stone is ground the whitening meal,
Than Sacripant, with hand and foot untir'd,
Turn'd, chang'd, and parry'd still as need requir'd.
Their swords Ferrau and Serpentino drew,
And midst the chiefs themselves undaunted threw :
Then Isolero, king Grandonio came, 586
And many nobles of the Moorish name.

Such was the tumult, such the noise combin'd,
That reach'd the tent where both the princes join'd,
Essay'd to calm Rogero's wrath in vain, 590
The Tartar lord and king of Sericane.

Now to king Agramant, perplex'd in thought,
A messenger unwelcome tidings brought,

That

That Sacripant, with Rodomont engag'd,
A cruel battle for his courser wag'd. 595

Then thus the king bespoke the lord of Spain:
Amidst these new alarms, thou here remain,
Lest aught should worse among these chiefs befall,
While I attend where yonder tumults call.

When Rodomont his royal lord beheld, 600
He stay'd his weapon, and his fury quell'd:
Not with less awe Circassia's prince retir'd,
When Agramant appear'd; who now enquir'd,
With kingly looks, and with majestic tone,
From what new cause this sudden strife was grown.
The whole declar'd, he fought with fruitless care 606
T' appease each warrior, and the breach repair.

Unmov'd, Circassia's monarch still deny'd
The king of Algiers longer should bestride
The generous steed, unless by fair request, 610
For that day's use he first his lord address'd.
But Rodomont, as wont, with fell disdain
Reply'd—Nor thou, nor Heaven, so far shall gain,
That, what this arm can on myself bestow,
I ever to another's gift will owe. 615

The king enquir'd of Sacripant his right
To urge such claim, and if by force or flight

He

He lost the steed: the prince the truth display'd,
 And, as he spoke, a blush his shame betray'd.
 He own'd how well the subtle thief had wrought, 620
 Who marking, while he fate entranc'd in thought,
 Four stakes beneath his saddle plac'd, and drew
 The courser thence, ere aught his rider knew.

Amidst the train appear'd Marphisa bold,
 Who, while his courser's loss the warrior told,
 In colour chang'd, for on the self-same day, 626
 A robber's hand* had borne her sword away.
 Advancing near, her eyes confess'd the steed,
 On which Brunello once with light-foot speed,
 Escap'd pursuit: brave Sacripant she knew, 630
 Till then unfound; she mark'd the mingled crew
 That crowded near, when numbers there appear'd,
 That oft these thefts from base Brunello heard.
 All turn'd to him, by whom they knew abus'd 634
 The knight and dame, and by their looks accus'd.
 Of each Marphisa ask'd, nor fail'd to find
 That this was he whose hand her sword purloin'd.

* BRUNELLO.

Ver. 620. *He own'd how well the subtle thief, &c.*] This ludicrous and extravagant incident is taken from Boyardo. The passage is wittily ridiculed by Cervantes, where Sancho, while asleep, loses his ass, which is stolen from him by Gines de Pasamonte in the same manner.

She

She learnt, for this and many an impious cheat,
For which he well deserv'd a noose to meet,
By Agramant the shameless wretch was prais'd, 640
And (strange to tell) to regal honours rais'd.
Marphisa felt her former wrath to wake,
Determin'd, for her injur'd honour's sake,
On the foul thief a just revenge to take.

Now by her squire she bade her helm be lac'd, 645
Her other shining arms already brac'd
Her martial limbs, for never yet the maid
Ten days was seen, but bright in mail array'd,
Since her fair person, brave beyond compare,
She first inur'd the weight of steel to bear. 650
Then, with her helmet clos'd, she went and found
Brunello seated midst the peers around.
Him, when she saw, the dame with furious heat
Seiz'd by the throat, and dragg'd him from his seat;
Easy, as grip'd within his hooky claws, 655
The ravenous eagle some weak chicken draws,
And bore him thus before Troyano's heir,
Then deep engag'd to heal intestine war.
Brunello, fearing worse might yet befall,
Ceas'd not to weep, and loud for pity call. 660

His

His cries were heard amidst the mix'd alarms
Of shouts and tumults from the camp in arms.
For mercy now he sues, now aid demands :
Near as he drew, thick crowd the gazing bands :
To Afric's king the dame her prisoner took, 665
And thus address'd him with an haughty look :

 This wretch, thy vassal, by my hand ere long
Aloft suspended, shall atone the wrong
My honour felt—for know his shameful theft,
Him of his horse, me of my sword bereft. 670

Should there be one who dares my purpose blame,
Forth let him stand, and what he thinks proclaim :
To prove my justice, I his might defy,
And in thy presence give his tongue the lye.
Since some may urge, ill-chosen time I take, 675
When civil broils so many murmurs make ;
When discord kindles now, with dire alarms,
The bravest warriors of the camp to arms ;
Three days I respite his determin'd fate,
Meanwhile would any friend prolong his date, 680
Let such appear—if not ere then releas'd,
I give him to the birds a welcome feast.

Ver. 670. ———*me of my sword*—] This is told in Boyardo.
See Book xviii. note to ver. 732.

But three miles distant by the wood's lone side,
 To yonder tower behold my course I guide :
 Without companion shall I there retire, 685
 Save two, a damsel and a faithful squire.
 If any dare this wretch's cause befriend,
 There let him come, I there his arms attend.

She said ; and waiting no reply, pursu'd
 Her destin'd way to reach the neighbouring wood,
 Brunello on her courser's neck she cast, 691
 And in his locks the martial virgin fast
 Her hand secur'd, while loud he shriek'd and pray'd,
 Invoking every friend by name for aid.

King Agramant, amid these tumults tost, 695
 Where thought itself to find a clue was lost,

Above

Ver. 695. *King Agramant, amid these tumults—*] Nothing can be better worked up than the confusion in the camp of the Pagans, from these dissensions among their leaders. Cervantes humourously makes Don Quixote, in the midst of the quarrels at the Inn, thus allude to the above passage of Ariosto: "Did I not tell you, Sirs, that this castle was enchanted, and that some legion of devils must certainly inhabit it? In confirmation whereof, I would have you see, with your own eyes, how the discord of Agramant's camp is passed over, and transferred hither among us. Behold how there they fight for the sword, here for the horse, yonder for the eagle—here again for the helmet; and we all fight, and no one understands another. Come, therefore, my lord judge, and you master priest, and let one

of

Above the rest more forely now displeas'd,
 Beheld Brunello by Marphisa seiz'd:
 Not that he still the treacherous caitiff lov'd;
 Who (some few days elaps'd) his anger mov'd. 700
 Ere since the ring's late loss, the king resolv'd
 Brunello's fault, and oft his death resolv'd.
 But now he deem'd a monarch's sacred name
 Too boldly scorn'd, and red with conscious shame,
 He stood prepar'd to follow, with his hand 705
 T' avenge th' affront that regal power sustain'd:
 But grave Sobrino, present, soon inclin'd,
 To better thoughts the prince's wrathful mind.
 It ill beseem'd, in such a cause, (he said)
 So great a king, of sovereign kings the head, 710
 To wage a fight, where, should his arms succeed,
 More blame than honour must attend the deed:

of you stand for king Agramant, the other for king Sobrino, and make peace among us, &c."

See JARVIS'S *Don Quixote*, Vol. I. B. iv. C. xviii.

Ver. 707. *But grave Sobrino, &c.*] This is the first appearance of Sobrino in Ariosto. His character is continued from Boyardo, where he makes a figure in the council held by Agramant, to debate on the intended invasion of France, and endeavours to dissuade the king from that expedition. Sobrino appears to be the Nestor of the poem.

When

When men would say—"Much has our king obtain'd,

Who scarce hard conquest o'er a woman gain'd!"

Great is his danger, small his praise must prove 715

Who dares against her arm to combat move.

'Twere best to leave Brunello to his death:

Or if a word could save the culprit's breath

From threaten'd noose, that word we should withhold,

And leave the course of justice uncontrol'd. 729

Thou canst (he added) to Marphisa send,

That she his sentence may to thee commend

As king and judge—and first thy promise plight,

The hangman's hand shall do her honour right.

But should she this refuse—the contest cease, 725

Leave him to her—and rest the maid in peace:

So still to thee her love be firmly ty'd,

Hang up Brunello, and all thieves beside.

Sobrino's words the monarch's warmth assuage,

Who listens to his counsel just and sage; 730

Nor only leaves himself at large the maid,

But wills that none should her retreat invade;

For public good, his feelings he suppress'd,

And hop'd, by his example o'er the rest,

To soothe to concord each contending breast. 735

But

But Discord laugh'd aloud, who knew no fear
 Of peace or friendship ever more to hear:
 Now here, now there, she travers'd o'er the plain,
 Nor could the tumult of her joy contain:
 No less exulting, stalk'd her sister Pride, 740
 Who constant fuel to the fire supply'd,
 And, with a shout that reach'd the firmament,
 The sign of victory to Michael sent.
 At that dread voice, at that tremendous sound,
 The Seine ran back, and Paris trembled round; 745
 Through Arden's fable groves the echoes spread,
 And savage beasts in gloomy coverts fled:
 Blaia, and Arli, Rhone's far-winding shore, 748
 The Alps, and mount Ghibenna heard the roar:
 This Rhodan, Soane, Garonna, Rhine confess'd;
 While mothers clasp'd their infants to the breast.
 Each furious chief, demands the fight to wage,
 And each will foremost in the list engage:

Ver. 744. *At that dread voice, &c.*] See Virgil.

Contremuit nemus, &c.

Et trepidæ matres pressere ad pectora natos.

ÆN. VII.

Young mothers wildly stare with fears possess'd,

And strain their helpless infants to their breast.

The woods all thunder'd —————

DRYDEN.

Their claims, so various, so perplex'd the noose,
 Apollo's self could scarce the bands unloose : 755
 Yet every art king Agramant would try,
 And first the Gordian knot of strife untye
 Between the African* and Scythian † lord,
 For beauteous Doralis, by both ador'd.
 The king, by turns, would each to reason bend, 760
 As prince, as brother, counsellor, and friend :
 But when he saw, that neither would incline
 To truce, or peace, or her he lov'd resign ;
 Fair cause of all their strife ! he sought to find
 Some middle course, to meet each rival's mind. 765
 He meant the damsel should decide their loves,
 And name the consort, whom her choice approves
 So, at her sovereign bidding, might they cease
 From further strife, and firmly bind the peace.
 Each knight agreed, for each his love believ'd 770
 With mutual passion by the dame receiv'd.
 The king of Sarza, who long time had su'd
 To gain her hand, ere Mandricardo woo'd ;
 Accustom'd in her presence still to live,
 With every grace that fits a maid to give ; 775
 Securely hop'd, her sentence would dismiss
 His jealous pangs, and fix his future blifs.

* RODOMONT.

† MANDRICARDO.

Nor he alone, but thus each Pagan thought,
Who knew for her what deeds his arm had wrought,
In tournament and field—not thus (they cry'd) 780
Should Mandricardo by her doom abide.

But he who love's soft hours with her had led,
While Sol on worlds below his splendor shed ;
Who knew what flame her gentle heart avow'd,
Laugh'd at the judgment of the erring crowd. 785

Before his sovereign lord each peer confirms,
With every solemn form, the stated terms,
Then to the dame appeals ; with downcast eyes,
While her fair face the bloomy colour dyes,
She owns her bosom held the Tartar dear : 790
With wonder all the soft confession hear.

Fierce Rodomont, as if each sense was fled,
Scarce dares again exalt his drooping head ;
But when his wonted fury had dispell'd
The first surprise and shame, that silence held 795
His falt'ring tongue, he call'd the doom unjust,
And, snatching from his side his surest trust,
Before the king and camp the blade he draws,
And swears, that this shall win or lose the cause ;
Not the light breath of woman's wayward will, 800
Who what they least should value, favour still.

Swift Mandricardo answers to his call :

Act as thou wilt—I stand prepar'd for all.

Yet ere thy ship the harbour safely gains,

A mighty tract of sea unplough'd remains. 805

But Agramant here interpos'd, and blam'd

The Sarzan prince, who 'gainst all order claim'd

The fight anew—so far the king prevails,

He makes this rising fury strike her sails.

Now Rodomont, indignant to sustain 810

A two-fold shame before this princely train :

First from his king, to whom his pride gave way,

And next his dame, in one ill-omen'd day,

No longer there will dwell, but from the band,

That late in battle own'd his guiding hand, 815

Two squires alone he takes, and, swift as wind

Departing, leaves the Moorish tents behind.

As when the furly bull, o'ercome in fight,

Requies his heifer for the victor's right ;

For

Ver. 818. *As when the furly bull, —]* See Virgil.

Nec mos bellantes una stabulare, sed alter

Victus abit, longaque ignotus exulat oris,

Multa gemens, ignominiam, plagamque superbi

Victoris, tum quos amicit inultus amores ;

Et stabula spectans regnis excessit avitis.

GEORG. Lib. III. v. 224.

Nor,

For woods and barren sands he leaves the mead, 820
 Where once he us'd the numerous herds to lead :
 Loudly he roars, as night or day returns,
 While still his breast with inbred fury burns.
 So struck with rage, with frenzy and despair,
 Goes Algier's king, rejected by the fair. 825
 Him good Rogero had prepar'd with speed
 To follow, and regain his faithful steed ;
 But soon recalling to his generous mind
 The list with Mandricardo next design'd,
 He checks his rein, and turns to claim the fight 830
 Ere king Gradasso next assert his right
 To Durindana, with the Scythian * knight.
 Yet much he griev'd to see, before his eyes,
 Frontino lost, an undisputed prize.

Nor, when the war is o'er, their rage expires;
 To distant vales the vanquish'd wretch retires;
 Weeps his disgrace, his conquering rival's boast,
 Yet more the fair, that unreveng'd he lost;
 And oft with pensive looks, as he retreats,
 The parting exile views his ancient feats.

WARTON, ver. 290.

* MANDRICARDO.

Z 3

Though

Though once his battle with the Tartar fought, 835
 Not long his generous steed shall rest forgot.
 But Sacripant, whom no such cause detain'd,
 For whom no other strife or list remain'd;
 In haste the course of Rodomont pursu'd,
 And soon had join'd him, but a chance withstood;
 A sudden chance that cross'd him in the way, 841
 And kept him wandering all the live long day.
 By fortune fall'n amidst the Seine he found
 A hapless maid, who in the stream had drown'd,
 But that he came to give her timely aid, 845
 Leapt in the flood, and her to land convey'd.
 He sought his steed, but loosen'd from his hand
 The steed awaited not his lord's command:
 All day he fled, and scarce with setting light,
 Resign'd his bridle to the weary'd knight. 850
 Two hundred miles o'er hill and plain he pass'd,
 But where he found stern Rodomont at last,
 And how they met, I shall not here record,
 With small advantage to Circaffia's lord.

Ver. 844. *A hapless maid,—*] This adventure, just touched
 upon here by Ariosto, is no where else mentioned by him, or by
 Boyardo.

How

How there he lost his steed, and how he fell, 855

In captive bonds—I hasten now to tell,

How fir'd with wrath, before the princes sham'd,

Against his mistress and his king inflam'd;

Far from the camp the king of Sarza went,

And how on both he gave his anger vent. 860

Where'er the Saracen in frenzy griev'd,

The ambient air his burning sighs receiv'd.

In pity Echo from her cavern mourn'd,

And to his plaints, in plaintive notes return'd. 865

O female sex! (he cry'd) whose worthless mind,

Inconstant, shifts with every changing wind :

O faithless woman! perjur'd and unjust,

Most wretched those who place in thee their trust!

Not all my service try'd, my love express'd 870

thousand proofs, could in one cruel breast

Secure a heart, so soon, alas! estrang'd

From truth like mine, and to another chang'd.

Nor have I lost thee now, because my name

Is deem'd eclips'd by Mandricardo's fame : 875

Ver. 856. *In captive bonds—*] In another part, mention is made of Sacripant being vanquished by Rodomont at the bridge; but no particular account is given of that incident.

Though once his battle with the Tartar fought, 835
 Not long his generous steed shall rest forgot.
 But Sacripant, whom no such cause detain'd,
 For whom no other strife or list remain'd;
 In haste the course of Rodomont pursu'd,
 And soon had join'd him, but a chance withstood;
 A sudden chance that cross'd him in the way, 841
 And kept him wandering all the live long day.
 By fortune fall'n amidst the Seine he found
 A hapless maid, who in the stream had drown'd,
 But that he came to give her timely aid, 845
 Leapt in the flood, and her to land convey'd.
 He fought his steed, but loosen'd from his hand
 The steed awaited not his lord's command:
 All day he fled, and scarce with setting light,
 Resign'd his bridle to the weary'd knight. 850
 Two hundred miles o'er hill and plain he pass'd,
 But where he found stern Rodomont at last,
 And how they met, I shall not here record,
 With small advantage to Circaffia's lord.

Ver. 844. *A hapless maid,—*] This adventure, just touched
 upon here by Ariosto, is no where else mentioned by him, or by
 Boyardo.

How

How there he lost his steed, and how he fell, 855

In captive bonds—I hasten now to tell,

How fir'd with wrath, before the princes sham'd,

Against his mistress and his king inflam'd;

Far from the camp the king of Sarza went,

And how on both he gave his anger vent. 860

Where'er the Saracen in frenzy griev'd,

The ambient air his burning sighs receiv'd.

In pity Echo from her cavern mourn'd,

And to his plaints, in plaintive notes return'd. 865

O female sex! (he cry'd) whose worthless mind,

Inconstant, shifts with every changing wind :

O faithless woman! perjur'd and unjust,

Most wretched those who place in thee their trust!

Not all my service try'd, my love express 870

By thousand proofs, could in one cruel breast

Secure a heart, so soon, alas! estrang'd

From truth like mine, and to another chang'd.

Nor have I lost thee now, because my name

Is deem'd eclips'd by Mandricardo's fame : 875

Ver. 856. *In captive bonds—*] In another part, mention is made of Sacripant being vanquished by Rodomont at the bridge; but no particular account is given of that incident.

Nor know I what my source of woe to call—
 But thou art woman—that comprizes all!
 O sex accurs'd!—by God and Nature sent,
 A deadly bane to poison man's content!
 So hateful snakes are bred, the wolf and bear 880
 So haunt the shades; so nurs'd by genial air
 Swarm gnats and wasps, the venom'd insect train,
 And tares are bred amidst the golden grain.
 Why could not Nature (fostering nurse of earth!)
 Without thy aid, give man his happier birth? 885
 As trees, by human skill engrafted, bear
 The juicy fig, smooth plum, or racy pear?

Ver. 878. *O sex accurs'd!*] This exclamation of Rodomont
 against the female sex, may recall to the mind of the reader, the re-
 flections of Adam on the transgression of Eve, particularly these
 lines.

————O! why did God,
 Creator wise, who peopled highest heaven
 With spirits masculine, create at last
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect
 Of nature, and not fill the world at once
 With men, as angels, without feminine,
 Or find some other way to generate
 Mankind——

PAR. LOST, Book X.

But it must be frankly acknowledged, that the passage of Ariosto
 is, as too usual, debas'd by ludicrous images and expressions.

But,

But, ah! can Nature aught that's perfect frame,
 When Nature bears herself a female name?
 Yet be not hence with empty pride o'er-run, 890
 To think, O woman! man is born your son.
 On prickly thorns appears the blooming rose;
 And from a fetid herb the lily grows.
 Infidious, cruel sex! whose faithless mind 864
 No love can influence, and no truth can bind;
 Ingrate and impious, plagues of human kind! }

Complaining thus, the king of Sarza rode,
 Now murmur'd low, now rais'd his voice aloud,
 Heard far and wide; with undistinguish'd blame,
 At once involving all the female name. 900
 Rash! unadvis'd! though some our anger raise,
 For three found ill, a hundred merit praise.
 What, if amidst the fair I yet have lov'd,
 Not one, perchance I met, that faithful prov'd : 904
 Shall

Ver. 889. *When Nature bears herself a female name?*] Surely the poet has carried this conceit to the utmost, that Nature, being herself a female, and consequently imperfect, could produce nothing perfect.

Ver. 903. *What, if amidst the fair, &c.*

Ere creeping age shall change these locks to grey.] The attachment of Ariosto to the fair sex, has been shewn in the account of his life, and appears in various parts of his works, and this passage in

Shall I the whole with general censure blot,
 And not accuse my own unhappy lot?
 Such was my chance—if, midst a hundred, one
 Were faithless found, on her my choice must run.
 But still I trust, ere life with years decay, 910
 Ere creeping age shall change these locks to grey,
 Some happier hour may yet my hope renew,
 And see my love repaid with love as true.
 Should e'er such future bliss my vows befall,
 That faithful she will make amends for all: 915
 While to the height her honours I rehearse,
 With pen or tongue, in prose, or numerous verse.

The Saracen, who thus his mistress blam'd
 As ill advis'd against his king exclaim'd;
 And oft he wish'd some storm of adverse fate 920
 Might fall unlook'd, to overwhelm his state;
 To make each wretched house in Afric mourn,
 And to the lowest stone each pile o'erturn;
 That Agramant, expell'd his realm in grief,
 Might rove a mendicant without relief; 925

in particular, among many others, seems to prove that his love had been divided by a number of objects, though, at the same time, it likewise seems to prove that he had been rather unsuccessful in the fidelity of his mistresses.

Till

Till once again his prowess should restore
The exil'd monarch to the regal power ;
And in his proof of loyal duty show,
What to a faithful friend a friend must owe ;
A faithful friend, whose merits should receive, 930
(Though worlds oppos'd) whate'er his prince could
give.

The Pagan thus, as troubled passions wrought,
Now on his king, now on his mistress thought:
He spurr'd his steed, but ne'er to sleep address'd
His watchful eyes, nor gave Frontino rest: 935
Next day his course to Sonna's banks he sped,
(That to Provence with winding current led)
For Africa once more to cross the main,
And see his long forsaken realms again.
He view'd the river, fill'd from side to side 940
With barks and vessels floating on the tide ;
That from afar, with all provisions stow'd,
To Pagan bands convey'd the welcome load.
The country round was subject to the Moors,
From Paris' walls to Acquamorta's shores ; 945
A pleasing tract ! and all from plain to plain,
Stretch'd on the right, that reach'd the bounds of
Spain.

Now

Now from the ships remov'd, the busy crow'd
 On many a beast and wain the burthens flow'd: 949
 From different parts the banks were cover'd round
 With well-fed herds, that graz'd the verdant ground;
 And near the river divers huts were kept,
 Where all night long the hinds and drivers slept.

The king of Algiers here, surpriz'd by night,
 When damps and gloom succeed departing light;
 Yields to a country host (there born and bread) 956
 Who begg'd him for his guest at board and bed.
 His steed dispos'd; rich plenty crown'd the board,
 With Greekish wines, and wines of Corfù stor'd.
 In all the rest a Moor the Pagan shew'd, 960
 But in his drink preferr'd the Gallic mode.
 The host, with welcome looks and sumptuous fare,
 Would every honour for his guest prepare;
 Whom by his garb and mien he well divin'd,
 A knight of prowess high, and noble kind. 965
 But he, at variance with himself (whose heart,
 As if divided from its better part,

Ver. 960. *In all the rest a Moor, &c.*] By the law of Mahomet his votaries are forbidden the use of wine: but the poet, who meant Rodomont for a character of impiety, makes him pay no attention to the dictates of his own religion, and only observe the customs of a Moor when they did not combat his passions.

Still

Still to his mistress turn'd) with pensive look
 There fate, nor with a word the silence broke.
 Our jolly host, who better could advance 970
 His private good than any host of France;
 Who midst a land with foreign foes o'er-run,
 Preserv'd his chattels, goods, and house his own;
 Had call'd, in honour of his noble guest,
 His friends and kindred to partake the feast. 975
 Of these none dar'd to speak, but gaz'd with awe,
 While mute and sad, the Saracen they saw;
 Who fate with head cast down in mournful wise,
 As if he fear'd to meet a stranger's eyes.
 Thus long he mus'd, till from his bosom broke 980
 A sigh, when sudden as from sleep he woke;
 Prepar'd to speak, his drooping lids he rais'd,
 And round the board with look compos'd he gaz'd;
 Then ask'd his host, and next to each apply'd,
 If any there the marriage state had try'd, 985 }
 And slumber'd with a consort at his side.

He said; the host, and every guest he found
 In wedlock's law to female partners bound.
 He next enquir'd, if each believ'd his spouse
 Had duly kept her matrimonial vows: 990

When,

When, save mine host, they one and all declar'd,
That none with them their wives' affections shar'd.

To this the host—Each, as he will, believes,
But sure am I—that each himself deceives :

For this your credulous, uxorious mind, 995

I can but call you each with dotage blind ;

And so no less must say this noble knight,

Unless he means to tell you black for white.

For as to enrich the world has Fate preferr'd

A single Phœnix (rare and only bird !) 1000

So, is it said, one only man through life,

Is giv'n to 'scape the fallhoods of a wife :

Each will himself that happy mortal call,

That husband sole, who bears the palm from all !

Yet how can each the boasted treasure own, 1005

When through the sex no two chaste wives are
known?

Like you I thought, and still perhaps had deem'd

All women virtuous, that were so esteem'd ;

But, that a gentle squire, in Venice bred,

And late for my good fortune hither led, 1010

Such stories told, all which full well he knew,

As from my thought the fond deception drew.

Francis

Francis Valerio was he call'd, whose name
 Shall ever place in my remembrance claim.
 Right was he learn'd in women, and could well
 The frauds of marry'd and unmarried tell: 1016
 Tales new, and tales long since, of every kind,
 He told, with these his own experience join'd;
 He fully prov'd, of high or low degree,
 How vain the hope a virtuous dame to see. 1020
 Should ever one seem chaster than the rest,
 'Tis that her art can veil her frailties best.
 From those (of which such numbers would he tell,
 That scarce the third in my remembrance dwell)
 One story fix'd within my mind remain'd, 1025
 And there engrav'd has still its place maintain'd;
 Which, all that hear, shall like myself receive,
 And every falsehood of the sex believe;
 And if it please thine ear, I, noble knight,
 To their confusion will the tale recite. 1030

Ver. 1013. *Francis Valerio*—] Gian' Francesco Valerio, a Venetian gentleman, a great enemy to women: he lived in intimacy with the poet, and is mentioned by him with particular kindness at the beginning of the XLVth Book, and is here likewise, by a poetical anachronism, made to live in the time of Charlemain, and from his hatred of women, Ariosto puts into his mouth this severe tale against the Sex.

What

What better (cry'd the Pagan) canst thou find,
To fuit the present temper of my mind,
Than stories, where examples may display
That worthless sex, accusom'd to betray?
Yet ere thou speak'st, against me take thy place,
So shall I better hear thee face to face. 1036

But, in the ensuing book, we see declar'd
What tale for Rodomont mine host prepar'd.

END OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH BOOK.

THE
TWENTY-EIGHTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

VOL. III

A a

THE ARGUMENT.

RODOMONT hears from his host the tale of Astolpho and Jocundo, a severe satire upon the female sex. The characters of women further discussed. Rodomont leaves his host, and pursues his intended journey for Algiers, but meeting with a pleasing spot, he takes possession of a chapel which the Christians had deserted, and resolves to fix his residence there. The arrival of Isabella and the hermit with the dead body of Zerbino,

THE
TWENTY-EIGHTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

YE dames! and ye to whom each dame is dear,
To this unhallowed tale refuse an ear;
A tale mine host has caught from lying fame,
To stain the lustre of the female name:

Yet

Ver. 1. *Ye dames, &c.*] This celebrated tale, one of the severest satires that was ever written upon the female sex, has been imitated by several authors, particularly by the witty Fontaine, the prior of France.

Boileau has compared this tale of Fontaine with the Joconde of M. Bouillon, and not only given the preference to the former, but endeavours to shew, that for the pleasantry of narrative, Fontaine is superior to the Italian author; at the same time he candidly speaks thus of Ariosto. “Donnez, si vous voulez, à l’Arioste toute la gloire de l’invention, ne lui denions pas le pris que lui est jestement

Yet such a tongue alike in vain essays 5
 To blot with censure, or exalt with praise :
 In blaming others, fools their folly show,
 And must attempt to speak when least they know.
 Pass o'er this part unread, the story stands
 Unhurt without it, nor the page demands ; 10
 What Turpin told before, I but rehearse,
 No envy prompts, no malice points the verse :
 My better lines your matchless worth have shown,
 My loyal faith to all your sex is known.
 To seal this truth a thousand proofs I give, 15
 That still in you, and you alone, I live.

dû, pour l'elegance, la netteté et la brevité inimitable avec laquelle il dit tant de choses en si peu de mots ; ne rabaissons point malicieusement, en faveur de notre nation, le plus ingénieux auteur des derniers Siècles ” *Dissertation sur la Joconde de M. Fontaine.*

It must be confessed, that several parts of this tale are highly exceptionable in the original for licentiousness of idea and language ; yet, if we compare the passages with other writers of the early times, we shall find that Ariosto is by no means entitled to exclusive censure. A general grossness then prevailed among the poets, particularly of the humorous kind, as our own Chaucer will sufficiently prove ; and Spenser, in a later age, will scarcely incur less condemnation. The account of Hellenor among the Satyrs, is equal for indelicacy to any parts of Ariosto. To this we may add, that the poets of a much more refined time have given themselves such unjustifiable liberties, that the severe eye of decency may find numerous passages to expunge in Prior, Dryden, and even Pope himself.

Then

Then pass, or with a careless eye survey
Th' opprobrious tale, the fable of a day.
But to resume my task—when every guest
A due attention in his looks express'd, 20
Mine host oppos'd against the Pagan fate,
And thus began his story to relate.

Where Lombardy extends her fruitful plain
The young Astolpho held his peaceful reign,
His brother's heir—renown'd for every grace 25
Of manly person, and the charms of face.
Scarce could Apelles, Zeuxis, or a name
More fam'd in art, have sketch'd a lovelier frame.
Thus fresh in blooming youth the monarch shone,
Fair in all eyes, but fairer in his own. 30
Much less he priz'd his state of kingly power,
His numerous armies, his exhaustless store
Of wealth and friends, in which he far excell'd
Each boasted prince that near dominion held,
Than beauty's gift, whose full perfection rais'd 35
His form o'er every youth for beauty prais'd.
Amongst the train that in their prince's fight
Paid daily homage, was a Roman knight,
Faustus his name, whom dear the king esteem'd,
And oft with him would boast how high he deem'd 40

His person's charms, and bade him boldly tell
If one he knew to match, much less excel,
Such manly grace: Thus he in vaunting pride:
And, as he little thought, the knight reply'd,
O king! (said Faustus) doubtless few there are 45
Whose beauty can with Pavia's lord compare:
But one I know may urge so bold a claim,
My brother he, Jocundo is his name:
Set him apart, your charms all charms efface:
His equal yours, or boast superior grace. 50

Astolpho with surprise these words receiv'd,
And scarce such unexpected truth believ'd;
Then felt a wish within his bosom rais'd
To see this youth unknown, so highly prais'd;
And Faustus urg'd his sacred faith to plight, 55
To bring this wonder to his prince's fight.

Great king (the knight return'd) with truth I
fear,

Hard is the task to bring Jocundo here:
Pleas'd with his humble lot assign'd by Fate,
Scarce is he known to pass the city's gate; 60
He lives content with his paternal store,
Nor squanders that, nor seeks to gather more;

And

And he as distant Pavia's towers would deem,
As some the banks of Tanais' icy stream;
But most I dread the attempt the youth to tear 65
From her whose love partakes his joy and care;
Th' enamour'd husband from a wife to draw,
Whose every wish to him is more than law.
Yet, gracious king, thy servant shall obey,
And prove each art to speed him on his way. 70

The king adds royal gifts to earnest prayers,
And for his embassy the knight prepares.

On wings of zeal observant Faustus flew,
And soon Imperial Rome arose in view:
Then to his brother's humble roof he went, 75
Told the king's wish, and gain'd his slow consent;
Implor'd the wife, and check'd each rising sigh
With thoughts of mighty gifts and honours high, }
And for his sake besought her to comply.

At length Jocundo fix'd the parting day, 80
And steeds and servants hir'd, and fair array
To deck his manly form, for oft the grace
Of costly vest improves a beauteous face.
Meanwhile with heaving breast and flowing tears,
The dear companion of his life appears; 85

Vows that his absence she shall ever mourn,
 And never live to see his wish'd return.
 Cease, my lov'd spouse, (the tender husband cries,
 While equal sorrows trickle from his eyes)
 Cease thy dear complaints, so Fortune speed my way,
 As but two months I my return delay, 91
 Nor Pavia's proffer'd crown should bribe my
 longer stay.

Ah, me! (she sigh'd) and must I then sustain
 Such length of absence, such an age of pain?
 Ah! no, the grave will first my portion be, 95
 These fading eyes no more their lord shall see:
 Then welcome death!—To sorrow thus a prey,
 Food she rejects, and groans the night away;
 Touch'd with her grief he lifts his eyes to Heaven,
 Oft sighs, and oft repents his promise given. 100

Now from her lovely neck a cross she drew,
 Thick set with precious gems of various hue,
 Which once a pilgrim of Bohemia bore
 When sick, returning from Judæa's shore;
 Her fire the drooping stranger entertain'd, 105
 And at his death the hallow'd relick gain'd.
 This cross she begg'd him at his neck to wear,
 And in his mind her dear remembrance bear.

With

With joy the youth is seen the pledge to take,
Not for memorial, but the giver's sake; 110
Since neither time nor place his faith could move,
Nor fortune, good or ill, disperse his love;
Nor could her image from his thought depart,
Or death's strong grasp divide it from his heart.

On that black evening, which fore-run the day 115
That her lov'd comfort summon'd on his way,
Increasing grief her tender soul oppress'd,
And oft she fainted on her husband's breast.
Not once they clos'd their eyes; no tongue can tell
How oft they kiss'd, how oft they bade farewell; 120
Till breaking from her soft embrace he fled,
And left her drown'd in sorrow on the bed.

Scarce two short miles he journey'd, ere his mind
Recall'd the treasure to his care consign'd,
The precious cross, which in his thoughtless haste,
He left behind beneath his pillow plac'd. 126
Ah me! (he cry'd) how fitly shall I frame
A fair pretence to mitigate the blame?
Well may my wife my loyal truth suspect,
Her gifts and love repaid with such neglect. 130
He knew 'twere vain, with cold excuse to send
A menial servant, or a nearer friend:

Himself in person must return to prove
His faith untainted, and her doubts remove.
He rein'd his steed, and cry'd, my Faustus, go 135
Tow'rds Pavia's court with gentle steps and slow,
I must again to Rome, but short my stay,
Soon shall my speed o'ertake you on the way;
No other can supply my wants—He said;
Then bade adieu, and turn'd his courser's head: 140
Alone he cross'd old Tyber's yellow stream,
What time the shade retir'd from Phœbus' beam:
When, hastening home, he found the darling fair
Fast lock'd in sleep (so poignant was her care!)
The curtain with a cautious hand he drew, 145
And view'd, what little there he thought to view;
For, lo! his chaste, his faithful spouse he found
In wanton sheets, with amorous fetters bound,
Clasp'd by a youth, in whose adulterous face,
He knew the author of his foul disgrace: 150
A low-born hind defil'd his master's bed,
Whose hand had rear'd him, and whose bounty fed.
Think what amazement chill'd his curdling blood,
As fix'd in stupid gaze he speechless stood:
Ne'er may your soul, by sad experience, know 155
The cruel anguish of Jocundo's woe.

Rage urg'd him on to draw the sword, and take
 A just revenge; but Love, that still could wake,
 For this ingrate, soft feelings in his breast,
 Spite of himself the threatening stroke repress'd. 160
 All-powerful Love, that from his anger sav'd
 Her forfeit life, so far his heart enslav'd,
 He fear'd to chace the slumber from her eyes,
 And with the shock her tender soul surpris'd.
 Silent the room he left, with silent speed 166
 The stairs descended, and regain'd his steed;
 Goaded by grief, he goads his fiery beast,
 And joins his brother ere the hour of rest.

All mark'd his change of cheer, his mournful
 look,

That some near anguish at his heart bespoke; 170
 Yet none, amidst so many, e'er divin'd
 The secret cause that rankled in his mind:
 All knew he left them to return to Rome,
 But he had made a trip to Cuckoldom.

Ver. 174. *But he had made a trip to Cuckoldom—*] The Italian
 is,

—gito era a Corneto:—

Corneto, the name of a place near Rome. The word likewise
 means Cuckoldom; but the humour of the original arising from the
 double meaning of the word, could not be preserved in the same man-
 ner in the translation.

Each

Each deem'd that love lay festering in his thought,
 But none could tell how love his sorrow wrought. 176
 His brother deem'd he mourn'd his comfort, left
 Of comfort and society bereft :

But he had different motives to complain,
 Her too much company had caus'd his pain. 180

He sighs, he weeps, while Faustus to his grief
 (The cause unknown) can yield no kind relief:
 In vain he seeks the healing balm to pour,
 What hand can heal, that cannot probe the sore?
 The healing balm is rankest venom found, 185
 Which more inflames, and wider makes the wound.

His comfort's once-lov'd name distracts his breast,
 His appetite is gone, and lost his rest ;
 While those fair features, that so late might claim
 The prize of beauty, seem'd no more the same : 190
 With deep-sunk eyes, and large projecting nose,
 With wither'd flesh, a skeleton he shows ;
 And, bred from grief, a fever on the way
 At Arbia, and at Arno forc'd his stay,
 Till lost those charms that once such fame had
 won, 195

Like gather'd roses fading in the sun.

Though

Though Faustus, touch'd with deep regret, perceiv'd

His brother's woeful state, no less he griev'd
To think the prince, to whom his faith he ow'd,
Should doubt his truth for praise so ill bestow'd. 200

He promis'd one of matchless form and face,
And one he brings depriv'd of every grace:
Yet with Jocundo, still he journey'd on,
Till now they enter'd Pavia's regal town:
But, fearful of disgrace, the Roman knight 205

At first declin'd to meet Aftolpho's fight,
Till to the king by letter he reveal'd
That dire disease, and some distress conceal'd,
Prey'd on his brother's ruin'd health, defac'd
His rosy bloom, and laid each beauty waste. 210

Aftolpho, gracious prince, well pleas'd to hear
The man he long'd so much to see was near,
Resolv'd his noblest welcome to extend,
And greet Jocundo as his dearest friend
No envy in his generous breast was known, 215
To find a beauty that excell'd his own;
Since, but for pale disease, full well he knew
His rival's charms must every charm subdue.

Superb

Superb apartments to the youth he gives,
And only in Jocundo's presence lives: 220
His wishes to prevent all means applies,
And every way to do him honour tries;
While he, unblest, in langour wastes his life,
Lamenting still the falsehood of his wife:
Nor song, nor dance, nor music's sprightly strains
Can drown remembrance, or assuage his pains. 226

In these apartments of the regal dome,
An ancient hall was next his lonely room,
The room where oft retir'd in grief he pines,
And shows, and games, and company declines; 230
Broods o'er the deed that robb'd his soul of rest,
And adds new scorpions to his tortur'd breast;
Yet, strange to tell, a balsam here he found,
Of sovereign power to close his rankling wound.

Far in the hall, where artificial night, 235
With windows ever clos'd, expell'd the light,
A chink appear'd, and through the mouldering flaw,
Whence came a feeble ray, he thought he saw
What few would hear, and fewer would believe,
Nor from another would himself receive. 240
There, through the opening chink, reveal'd was seen
The secret chamber of Astolpho's queen;

A sacred

A sacred privacy to all deny'd,
But those in whom the fair could well confide:
Here oft Astolpho's beauteous consort fate, 245
Forgetful of her lord and regal state;
And here he view'd a dwarf of hideous face,
And shape uncouth, the wanton fair embrace.

Struck with the sight, yet doubting what he
view'd,

As in a trance awhile Jocundo stood: 250

But, when convinc'd, no longer could he deem
The sight th' allusion of an idle dream.

Ye gods! (he cry'd) can she resign her charms
To the rude clasp of such a lover's arms?

A queen, whose lord with every gift is crown'd, 255

In form unrivall'd, as in worth renown'd!

Reflection that before so pain'd his heart,

Now took, by slow degrees, his consort's part.

What though she sought a young gallant to find,

Her fault was but the fault of all her kind: 260

Whose favours none could ever singly prove,

And if desire of change her breast could move,

At least no monster had enjoy'd her love. }

Next day, returning at th' accustom'd hour,

He found the lovers busy'd as before: 265

Still

Still fearless of surprise, the dwarf and dame
 The king dishonour'd with the deed of shame.
 Day following day their mutual vigour proves,
 And Sunday was no sabbath to their loves.
 Yet most he marvell'd that the fair complain'd, 270
 And thought th' ill-shapen cub her charms disdain'd.
 One morn, when to the friendly chink he came,
 He found, dissolv'd in tears, the amorous dame:
 Who twice already, by her trusty maid,
 Had call'd the dwarf, and still the dwarf delay'd. 275
 Again she sent: her maid these tidings brought;
 The dice, my lady, take up all his thought;
 And rather than forego his gain at play,
 He dares your gracious summons disobey.

At this strange sight Jocundo chang'd his cheer,
 No more his cheeks receive the falling tear; 281
 Joy lights his eyes, the clouds of grief are o'er,
 And what his name imports, he looks once more;
 His manly front resumes its wonted grace,
 And angel beauty brightens in his face. 285

The king, his brother, all the court, confess
 The wondrous turn; but none the cause can guess.

Ver. 283. *And what his name imports—*] The word *Giocundo*
 in the Italian, signifies cheerful, jocund.

If from the youth the monarch long'd to know
What sudden comfort had assuag'd his woe,
Not less the youth the secret wish'd to tell, 290
And to the king his injuries reveal;
Yet will'd he should for such atrocious fact,
Like him no vengeance from his wife exact:
Then by a sacred vow the prince he ty'd,
Whate'er his ear receiv'd, or eye descry'd, 295
Though the dire truth depriv'd his soul of rest,
Though in th' offence fell treason stood confess'd,
That, soon or late, he never would engage
The guilt to punish, but restrain his rage,
Nor let a single word or deed evince 300
The crime detected by an injur'd prince.

The king, who little dreamt his wrongs sustain'd,
By solemn plighted vow himself restrain'd.
Jocundo then began the cause to show,
Whence sickness, sprung from soul-consuming woe,
Prey'd on his health; and how his wife, debas'd
To fordid lust, had with his slave disgrac'd
Her husband's bed; how, near his death, he found
An unexpected salve to close the wound.
And know, O monarch! to my secret grief 310
Thy palace has supply'd the strange relief;

For while I mourn'd my fortune, chance disclos'd
A mightier far to equal fate expos'd.

He said, and to the place the monarch drew,
That gave his hideous rival to his veiw, 315
Whose charms had taught his faithful wife to yield,
And now was ploughing in another's field.

There needs not here an oath t' enforce belief,
If stiffen'd at the sight with rage and grief
The monarch stood, while scarcely he repress'd 320
The mingled passions struggling in his breast:
As one distraught of every sense he far'd,
With open lips for issuing words prepar'd:
But soon, remembrance of his vow repell'd
The rising tempest that within rebell'd. 325

Then to Jocundo—Say, what course remains?
Direct me, brother, since thy will restrains
My just resentment, and forbids this hand
To take the just revenge my wrongs demand.
Faith, (said Jocundo) let us these forsake, 330
And prove if others more resistance make;
With every art assail the wedded fair,
And plant on other's brows the fruits we bear. r
What woman shall our form and rank disdain
When such base paramours can grace obtain? 335

Grant

Grant that sometimes our youth and beauty fail,
The power of riches ever shall prevail:
Nor let us here return, till female smiles,
Won from a thousand, crown our amorous toils.
Long absence, while in foreign lands we roam, 340
To prove that virtue, to our cost at home
So fully prov'd, may sovereign balm impart
To sooth the anguish of an injur'd heart.

The king assents, and for th' intended way
With speed prepares, impatient of delay. 345
Through fruitful Italy their course they bend,
Two pages only on their steps attend.
And now they left the soft Italian land,
To visit Flanders, France, and Albion's strand.
Free to their love they found each melting fair, 350
And found the loveliest oft the kindest were:
And while on some they costly gifts bestow'd,
To other's bounty equal gifts they ow'd.
With siege of warm entreaty some they won.
And others pray'd themselves to be undone. 355
Here one short month, there two the lovers made
Their amorous stay, and every proof essay'd,
While, like the virtuous wives, each female, ty'd
In nuptial fetters, with their suit comply'd.

At length both tir'd, where both alike pursue 360
Increasing dangers with adventures new,
Conscious what mischiefs oft on those await
Who knock too frequent at their neighbour's gate;
Now deem'd it best to seek some generous fair,
Whose charms, by turns, might either's passion share,
For each had try'd, and try'd in vain, to prove, 366
A female constant to his single love.
Since still some other must partake my bed,
The place be yours, my friend (the monarch said).
Of all the sex this certain truth is known, 370
No woman yet was ere content with one.
Then let us with some gentle friend enjoy
A bliss, unmix'd with jealousy's alloy;
So shall our moments roll in sportive ease,
Nor shall our love disturb another's peace. 375
What better fortune can a woman claim
Than two such husbands to return her flame?
And while to one no wife will constant prove,
Yet surely two must gratify her love.

Thus spoke Astolpho; and the Roman youth 380
Approv'd what then he deem'd the voice of truth.
At length the Spaniard's ample realm they gain'd,
Where what they fought, Valenza's seats contain'd;

A daughter

A daughter of their host, of low degree,
Of manners mild, of features fair to see; 385
On her they fix'd—for on her blooming face
The spring of youth diffus'd its earliest grace.
With her the fire a numerous offspring rear'd;
And thoughts of pining poverty he fear'd:
He saw his means small portion could provide, 390
And few, he knew, would take a dowerless bride:
Hence, to their wish, he yields without delay
His daughter's charms, the solace of their way,
And on their love and plighted faith relies,
To treat with tender care their gentle prize, 395
They take the damsel, and in friendship prove
The amorous warfare of alternate love.
The Spanish region thence they travers'd o'er,
And pass'd the realms of Syphax to explore.
At noon they from Valenza took their way; 400
Zattiva clos'd the labours of the day.

The strangers here, as strangers ever do,
Proceed the wonders of the place to view:
Where many a costly dome demands their praise,
And reverend fanes their admiration raise. 405

Ver. 399. *The realms of Syphax*—] By the realms of Syphax
the poet means part of the kingdom of Africa.

Meantime the damsel fees, from room to room,
All ready for her lords' returning home :
Some spread the couch, some tend and feed with care
The weary'd steeds, and some the meal prepare.

It chanc'd, that busy'd thus the fair one spy'd 410
A youth, who oft had slumber'd by her side
In happier days, when with her father plac'd,
He liv'd a menial by her bounty grac'd.
Each other well they knew, but fear'd to speak,
Lest squint suspicion on their words should break. 415
But, all the rest retir'd, the lovers meet,
And, from discovery safe, each other greet.
The youth demands her whither she was bound,
And which, of either lord, her favour found?
Flammetta own'd the truth, for such the name 420
The damsel bore ; from Greece her lover came.
Ah, me ! (he cry'd) when Fortune seem'd to give
The long'd-for day with thee in joy to live,
My dear Flammetta seeks a foreign shore,
And wretched I must ne'er behold her more. 425
Thou go'st—and others have thy charms possess'd,
Sweet love is turn'd to poison in my breast :
In vain I hop'd, while still I strove to save
My pittance, earn'd by what each stranger gave,

With

With thee my slender fortune to divide, 430
And from thy father's hand receive my beauteous
bride.

The sorrowing fair-one clasp'd him to her breast
And mourn'd his fruitless suit so late address.

Sore wept the crafty Greek, and, with a sigh,
Can'st thou, inhuman, let thy lover die? 435

Give me, at least, ere we for ever part,
T' allay the flame that preys upon my heart;
One moment past in thy lov'd embrace,
Will make me death without complaining face.
Not less my wish (the amorous girl replies, 440

Consenting passion sparkling in her eyes)
But how, with spies surrounded, can we prove
Our mutual warmth, and give a loose to love?
Ah! (said the Greek) too well convinc'd I know,
Did half my ardor in thy bosom glow, 445
Thy wit would ev'n this night some means employ,
To snatch at least a momentary joy.

In vain (she answers) much-lov'd youth, you sue,
Since I each night repose between the two.
Weak is th' excuse (the plaintive Greek rejoin'd) 450
For if thou feel'st my woe, thy gentle mind

Will yield relief, and, spite of all, remove
Whate'er may seem t' oppose the suit of love.

Awhile she paus'd; then, smiling bade him come,
While all were slumbering, to the wish'd-for room;
Describ'd the way, and taught what course to take, 456
How, undiscover'd, his return to make.

Well pleas'd he heard, and when the drowsy god
Had laid on every eye his potent rod,
He seeks her door, with long and silent strides; 460
The door admits him: slowly in he glides:
Firm on his hindmost foot awhile he stays,
The other, rais'd, with cautious stealth essays
A forward step; and wide his hands are spread,
On either side to find th' expected bed. 465
He reach'd the feet, and made his artful way
Beneath the covering were Flammetta lay.

Soon as the Greek, the night's short blessing o'er,
Returning seeks the way he came before,
And Phœbus' beams to light the east begin, 470
Flammetta rising lets the pages in.

Now with his friend the king prepares to jest:
Brother (he cry'd) it fits thee sure to rest:
Some leisure must recruit your weary spright,
Tir'd with the watching of so long a night.

Jocundo

Jocundo then replies in taunting vein:
Repose be yours, since you the toil sustain.
You use my words—fair rest betide your grace,
As to the huntsman weary'd in the chace.
I, (said the king) I would in truth have try'd 480
The lover's suit, but found my suit deny'd.
Again Jocundo thus—Your slave am I,
'Tis yours to break, or with our terms comply.
But such dispute or taunts there needed none,
You might have chid my love, and claim'd your
own. 485

Words follow'd words, replies succeed replies,
Till oft repeated jests, grown serious, rise
To harsh debate: they call the girl to clear
The doubtful truth: the girl, with conscious fear,
Steps trembling forth, commanded to reveal 490
What each alike seem'd earnest to conceal.
Declare (with stern regard the monarch cry'd)
And fear not evil shall thyself betide,
Which of us two, so long in love's delight
Usurp'd with thee the pleasures of the night? 495
Impatient both await the girl's reply,
And hope her words will fix on one the lye:

Flammetta

Flammetta, lowly prostrate on the ground,
 Of life despairing since her fault was found,
 Implor'd forgiveness, and with tears confess'd, 500
 That, urg'd by love, which long had sway'd her breast,
 Some pity on a faithful swain to take,
 Who years had sigh'd, and sigh'd but for her sake,
 That night she gave the tender frailty way,
 In hopes one error would alike betray 505 }
 Each noble lover that beside her lay.

Thus she: Jocundo and the king amaz'd,
 Long, on each others face in silence gaz'd:
 Ne'er had they heard, nor through the world believ'd
 Two like themselves by female guile deceiv'd. 510
 Now sudden mirth the place of wonder took,
 And either's side convulsive laughter shook
 With peals so loud, that scarcely could they breathe,
 But sunk exhausted on the couch beneath. 514
 So much they laugh'd, their bosoms ak'd with pain,
 Nor could their eyes the gushing tears restrain:
 At length they said—What man shall hope to stay
 His wife from wandering the forbidden way?
 Since we, in one same bed, so closely join'd,
 Between us both in vain this last confin'd? 520

Were

Were numerous as his hairs a husband's eyes,
A wife's deceit would every watch surprize.
A thousand women we before have try'd,
Yet found not one our amorous suit deny'd.
A second thousand like the first would fall : 525
But this last proof may well suffice for all.
Then cease we more to blame our mates, or find
Their thoughts less chaste than those of all their kind ;
And since they both are virtuous as the best,
Let us return and live with them at rest. 530

This point resolv'd, they bade the lover come,
(Call'd by Flammetta) to receive his doom ;
With many a witness present, for his bride
They gave the girl, with ample gifts beside ;
Then both return'd contented to their wives, 535
And led in peace the remnant of their lives.

Here ceas'd mine host his story to relate,
While every guest with mute attention sat :
Nor yet the Pagan knight his silence broke,
At length, the tale concluded, thus he spoke. 540

What

Ver. 537. *Here ceas'd mine host—*] This is copied by Spenser, in his account of the Squire of Dames, with no less severity on the fair sex, where the squire relates, that travelling through the world in search

What various frauds, of every artful name,
 The wily heart of womankind can frame !
 Not all the power of human wit can tell,
 The thousandth part in which the sex excel.

But one of graver years, and reverend mien, 545
 And better judgment at the board was seen,
 Who inly wroth to hear the beauteous race
 Thus roughly treated by a tongue so base,
 And, conscious of their worth, in secret burn'd,
 And to the vile defamer thus return'd. 550

What cruel slanders every day supplies
 Detested tales, but thine the worst of lies!

search of a chaste woman, he finds only three to reject his suit, thus humourously characterized by the poet.

The first that then refused me (said he)
 Certes, was but a common courtesane,
 Yet flat refus'd to have a-do with me,
 Because I could not give her many a jane:
 (Thereat full heartily laugh'd Satyrane)
 The second was an holy nun to chose,
 Which would not let me be her chapellane,
 Because she knew (she said) I would disclose
 Her counsel if she should her trust in me repose.
 The third a damsel was of low degree,
 Whom I in country cottage found by chance,
 Full little weened I, that charity
 Had lodging in so mean a maintenance:
 Save her, I never any woman found
 That chastity did for itself embrace, &c.

FAIRY QUEEN, B. III. C. vii. St. 58.

Whoe'er

Whoe'er thy author be, though on his tongue,
In other points, ev'n gospel truths were hung ;
Not fair experience of the female kind, 555
But some offence late rankling in his mind
Urg'd him to speak ; his hatred of a few,
On all the sex such blame unjustly threw.
But let his wrath subside, and soon your ear 559
Would more their praises than their censure hear.
For one to blame, his lips might number o'er
A hundred women fam'd for virtuous lore :
Then cease to rail at all—if one has swerv'd
From honour's laws, which thousands have preserv'd.
And since thy friend Valerio other taught, 565
Not judgment sway'd, but passion warp'd his thought.
Say, which of you, in nuptial union ty'd,
Has never from his consort stept aside ;
Who, when occasion call'd, refus'd to taste
Forbidden pleasures, or his substance waste 570
On alien charms ; while, save the abandon'd crew
Of hireling loves, no women men pursue ?
Is there a husband will not leave his home
(Though fair his wife) for other joys to roam ;
Let smiling love from wife or maiden try 575
With gifts to bend, what virtue would deny ?

To

To please the sex what lover will refuse,
 Or stop his ear when charming woman sues?
 And oft, I fear, from some injurious cause,
 The fair are led t' infringe the nuptial laws: 580
 Perchance, their beauty view'd with fated eye,
 They see their lords to foreign beauties fly:
 Love claims return—what we to others give,
 We claim in equal measure to receive.
 Could I a statute frame, each guilty wife, 585
 In sinful commerce found, should yield her life,
 Unless she clearly to the world could prove,
 Her comfort had indulg'd unlawful love;
 But this once prov'd, the dame absolv'd should be,
 From courts, and from her lord's resentment free:
 For CHRIST has taught—"To others never do, 591
 That which yourselves would wish undone to you."
 Yet still incontinence, if this we call
 Weak woman's crime is not the crime of all.

Ver. 591. *For Christ has taught—*] The custom of introducing religious aphorisms, or allusions to texts of scripture, in compositions even of the familiar kind, was common with the writers of the early ages. Our Chaucer abounds with such instances, and many may be found in Shakespear; which passages were not then deemed exceptionable, nor, it is probable, gave offence to the nicest ear.

But

But even in this our sex's guilt is most, 595
Since not a man of chastity can boast :
All crimes are his, and crimes of deepest dye,
Usurious griping, pillage, blasphemy,
And crimson murder ;——crimes, though rarely
known

To woman's sex, familiar to our own. 600

Here the just sage his weighty reasons clos'd ;
And many a fair example had propos'd,
Of virtuous dames ; but with averted ear
The Pagan king, who loath'd the truth to hear, }
Aw'd him with threatening glance and brow severe. }
Yet while in dread the sage from speech refrain'd, 606
The truth unshaken in his soul remain'd.

The Sarzan prince here bade the contest cease,
Then left the board, and hop'd to rest in peace
Till dawn of day : but all the sleepless night, 610
He mourn'd his changeful mistress' cruel flight ;
And thence departing with the morning ray,
Resolv'd by ship to take his future way ;
Yet, like a champion, who with prudent heed
O'erwatches all, attentive for his steed, 615
That steed so good, so fair, which late he bore,
From Sacripant and from Rogero's power :

And

And conscious, that for two whole days he press'd
Too far the mettle of the generous beast;
He fix'd down Sonna's stream a bark to take, 620
For speed, for ease, and for Frontino's sake.

He bade the ready boatman from the shore
The cable loose, and stretch the dashing oar:
Before the wind the vessel lightly glides,
And the swift stream with swifter prow divides: 625
But Rodomont in vain, on land or wave,
From cruel care his anxious breast would save:
He mounts his steed, it follows close behind,
He sails the bark, it breaths in every wind!
Now in his soul the fatal inmate dwells, 630
And every hope or comfort thence expels;
While he, alas! with cruel anguish pain'd,
Conscious his inmost fort the foe has gain'd,
Expects no friendly hand can aid impart,
While self-consuming thoughts distract his heart.
All day and night, the liquid road he press'd, 636
His king and mistress rankling in his breast:
In vain from shore or bark he hopes relief,
Nor shore nor bark can sooth his rage of grief.
Thus the sick patient seeks t' assuage his pain, 640
While the fierce fever throbs in every vein;

From

From fide to fide, he shifts his place by turns,
But unremitting still the fever burns.

Tir'd with the stream, again he fought the strand,
And pass'd Vienna and Valenza's land. 645

The walls of Lyons next the Pagan view'd,
And where Avignon's bridge stupendous stood.
These towns, and more, of semblance rich and gay,
That 'twixt th' Iberian hills and river lay, 649

Paid to the Monarch-Moor * and king of Spain
Allegiance due, as lords of that domain,
Won by their bands from Gallia's shrinking reign. }

Thence on the right to Acquamort he bends,
And strait for Afric's realm his course intends;
Till near a river he a town survey'd, 655

Which Ceres once and purple Bacchus sway'd;
Compell'd their favourite dwelling to forego
From cruel inroads of a barbarous foe:
Here smile the fields, there roars the surgy main,
And bright in vallies gleams the golden grain. 660

* AGRAMANT.

Ver. 648. *These towns, and more, &c.*] By the river, he means the Rhodan, by the Iberian hills, he means the hill Jubaldo in Spain, by which he would infer that Agramant and Marfilius, after the last defeat of Charles, had made themselves masters of Catalonia, and from Narbona (Narbonne) to Paris.

On this fair spot a chapel neat he found,
Built on a hill, and lately wall'd around:
This, when the flames of war their horror spread,
The priest deserted, and with terror fled:
Struck with the site, as from the camp remov'd,
The hated camp and arms no longer lov'd, 666
The king resolv'd on this sequester'd shore
To fix his seat, nor dream of Afric more:
Pleas'd with this new abode and place of rest,
Algiers so lov'd was banish'd from his breast. 670
With their stern lord the squires attending dwell'd,
The walls himself, his train, and courser held;
Not far his turrets proud Montpelier shows;
And, near, another stately castle rose;
Which seated on the river's gentle tide, 675
The town with stores for every need supply'd.

One day, while deep immers'd in pensive mood,
The king, as wont, a thousand thoughts pursu'd;
Along a path-way through th' enamell'd green,
Approaching nigh, a lovely dame was seen: 680
An aged monk, with beard descending low,
Beside her came, with solemn steps and slow;
A warrior-steed he led, that proudly bore
A weighty bier with fable cover'd o'er:

But

But who the monk, and who th' afflicted fair, 685

Or what the load, 'twere uselefs to declare :

All knew 'twas Isabella, haplefs maid,

Who lov'd Zerbino's breathlefs corse convey'd :

Her in Provence I left, and at her side

This reverend fire, her comforter and guide ; 690

By whom confirm'd, she meant her future days

To dedicate for God's eternal praise.

Though on her cheek was spread a death-like hue,

Though to the winds her locks dishevell'd flew ;

Though sighs incessant speak her curelefs woe, 695

And from her eyes unbidden fountains flow :

Though every mournful sigh too well exprefs'd

The anguish harbour'd in her gentle breast ;

Through all her grief such beauties were descry'd

The Loves and Graces there might still reside. 700

Soon as the Saracen the mourner view'd,

Th' unlook'd for sight his haughty soul subdu'd ;

No more he blam'd, or loath'd that gentle race,

Whose charms inspire us, and whose virtues grace ;

While Isabella worthy seem'd to prove 705

The peerlefs object of his second love ;

And from his breast expunge Granada's dame,

As pity yields to pity, flame to flame,

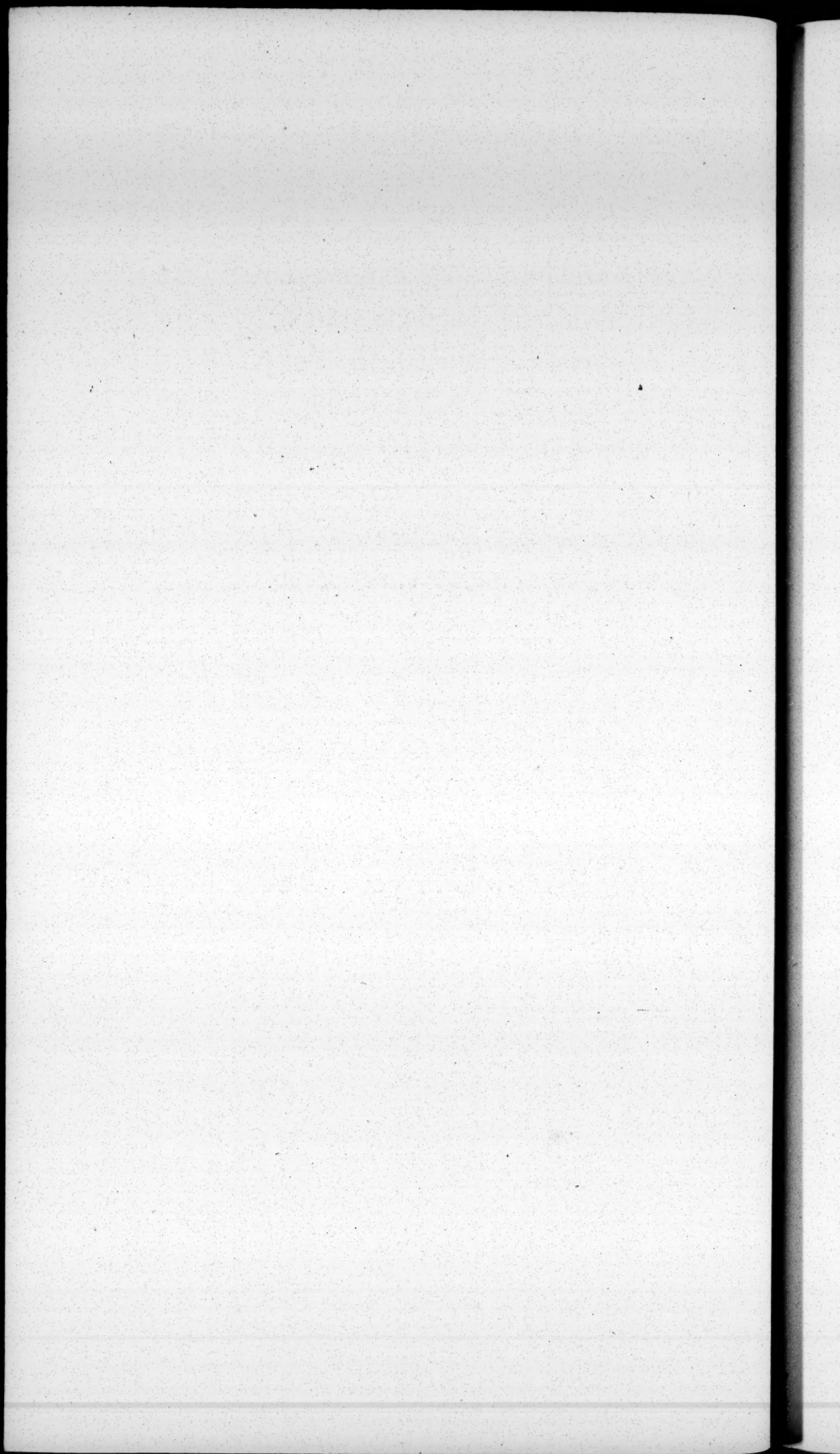
The Pagan saw, and kindling at the view,
With eager step to meet the virgin drew; 710
And with demeanour fair and mild address,
Enquire the cause that wrought her deep distress.
She told the sorrows of her secret breast,
And, how deny'd on earth a place of rest,
Her soul had fix'd to bid the world farewell, 715
And with her God in holy mansions dwell.
Loud laugh'd the Pagan, who nor God would know,
Nor own his laws, to every faith a foe!
He blam'd her erring zeal, to keep confin'd
Such beauty, form'd but to delight mankind: 720
The sordid miser, brooding on his store,
Thus hides (he cries) in caves his shining ore;
Whence nothing good he to himself derives,
And others of his useful wealth deprives:
Snakes, lions, bears are cag'd in fear of harm, 725
Not guiltless maids who breathe but love and charms.

The man of God, who such vain converse fears,
Like skilful pilot that the vessel steers,
Attends his charge, lest lightly drawn astray,
Her feet should wander from the rightful way: 730
And now the hoary fire with grace indu'd,
Prepares a splendid feast of holy food.

But

But the fierce Pagan, born with evil taste,
Rejects the dainties of the rich repast.
At length, when oft he chid, oft strove in vain 735
The preacher's hateful counsel to restrain,
His patience wasted, with vindictive ire
He rais'd his arm against that aged fire :
Yet lest our story should too long appear,
We, for your ease, will close the labours here, 740
And let this hapless monk th' example teach,
To curb the licence of ungovern'd speech.

END OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH BOOK.



THE
TWENTY-NINTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

C c 4

THE ARGUMENT.

RODOMONT falls in love with Isabella, and endeavours to persuade her to break her vow: His behaviour to the hermit who opposes him. The fortitude of Isabella, and her device to preserve her chastity. Conflict between Rodomont and Orlando. Further account of the mad actions of Orlando. Medoro and Angelica, in their way to embark for India, meet with Orlando, when Angelica, with great difficulty, escapes from the madman's hands.

THE
TWENTY-NINTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

BEHOLD the state of man's unstable mind,
Still prone to change with every changing wind!
All our resolves are weak, but weakest prove
Where sprung from sense of disappointed love:
When late the Saracen to wrath inflam'd, 5
On womankind with bitterest gall exclaim'd,
It seem'd as if no power could e'er control,
Far less expunge such hatred from his soul.
So much, fair dames, his words your bard provoke,
Which ill advis'd against your sex he spoke, 10
That never will I leave him, till his breast
Again has beauty's sovereign sway confess'd:
Still shall my verse condemn his slanderous speech,
That foully durst your spotless name impeach.

The

The shafts of rage he from his quiver drew, 15
And these, at all, without distinction threw :
But Isabella, with a single look,
At once his firmest resolution shook ;
And now to her he chang'd his former flame,
Though yet to him unknown her county, race, or
name. 20

Thus, as new passion fir'd his amorous thought,
With every eloquence of words, he sought
To shake the purpose of her steadfast will,
That would to God her virgin vow fulfil.
The hermit, as a fencing shield, to arm 25
Her chaste intent against all worldly harm ;
By pious reasons, strong and duly weigh'd,
With all his power stood forth to guard the maid.
Not long the impious Pagan could endure
The holy fire, who preach'd in zeal secure : 30
He bade him, in good time, his cell regain,
And leave the damsel ; but he bade in vain :
Till rous'd at length, no longer he forbore,
But seiz'd his beard, whence by the roots he tore
The silver hairs ; and, with dire rage impell'd, 35
With savage grasp his aged neck he held ;

And

And, whirling round, some three miles thence he
threw ;

Swift tow'rd the sea the wretched hermit flew !

What then befel him, little I relate,

For various tales are rumour'd of his fate : 40

Some say against a rock his limbs were thrown,

And piecemeal dash'd upon the craggy stone :

Some say, that midst the sea his death he found,

And, as he knew not how to swim, was drown'd

Spite of his orisons—Some say, the hand 45

Of his good Saint convey'd him safe to land :

But be it as it may,—I pass it o'er,

Henceforth of him the story speaks no more.

When cruel Rodomont had thus remov'd

The talking hermit, oft in vain reprov'd, 50

With milder looks he turn'd, where, at his side,

The damsel stood all pale and terrify'd ;

Whom now in speech by lovers oft address'd,

He call'd his life, of every good the best ;

Ver. 37. *And whirling round—*] No partiality for the poet can apologize for the extravagance of such passages as these: wherever they occur, the translator freely gives them up to the critic, as lawful game, and means this for a general declaration of his opinion on the subject.

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Whom now in speech by lovers oft address'd,

He call'd his life, of every good the best ;

Ver. 37. *And whirling round—*] No partiality for the poet can apologize for the extravagance of such passages as these: wherever they occur, the translator freely gives them up to the critic, as lawful game, and means this for a general declaration of his opinion on the subject.

His

His balm of hope, fair comfort, smiling joy, 55
 With each endearment amorous tongues employ.
 Courteous he seem'd, as if he would disarm
 Her thoughts of fear, that any force might harm
 Her virgin vow : those graces that inflam'd
 His cruel heart, his wonted pride had tam'd ; 60
 And though his hand could pluck the fruit, he chose
 T' abstain at distance, and but touch the boughs.
 He fondly hop'd by slow degrees to find
 Fair Isabella to his wish inclin'd :
 While she, subjected to a tyrant's laws, 65
 (Like some poor mouse within her foe's sharp claws)
 Unfriended and forlorn, would rather dare
 The worst of ills than what she fear'd to bear ;
 Still pondering on the means, if such could be,
 Herself and honour from his power to free ; 70
 With her own hand determin'd to prevent
 Her shame by death, ere his abhorr'd intent
 Should make her wrong the knight, who, late en-
 twin'd
 By her lov'd arms, his parting breath resign'd ;

Ver. 66. *Like some poor mouse, &c.*] Certainly too ludicrous
 an image on so pathetic an occasion.

To

To whom, with heart devout, the mourning dame
Had vow'd to dedicate her virgin name. 76

She mark'd, and trembling mark'd, th' unhallow'd
fire

That warm'd the Pagan with impure desire.
What shall she do? How shape her dangerous course?
What way remains t' elude his brutal force? 80

Long time revolving in her fearful mind
A thousand schemes, at length, her thoughts design'd
One that might save her chastity from blame;
Which here we tell to her eternal fame,

The Pagan, by his words and deeds, confess'd 85
The lurking purpose of his impious breast:

Loft was the courtesy which first he show'd,
When fair his speech in gentlest accents flow'd.
To him the damsel—Would'st thou but ensure
My honour safe, a gift thou may'st procure, 90
Of far more worth than aught thou canst obtain
From what must fix on me eternal stain.

Ver. 89. — *Wouldst thou but ensure,*

My honour safe, &c.—] A similar story is told of a
virgin in the time of Mirvan, the caliph, in the eighth century, and
of another named Brasilla (the time uncertain) related by Francesco
Barbaro, in his book concerning the choice of a wife.

ZATTA.

Scorn

Scorn not a lasting prize, a prize to raise
O'er all the sons of war thy deathless praise.
A hundred and a hundred may'st thou find, 95
Fair dames the loveliest of our female kind;
But who, like me, are fated to bestow
Th' invaluable good thou to my hand may'st owe.
A herb I know, and late have seen, that boil'd
With rue and ivy, o'er a fire when pil'd 100
With cypress-wood, will (strange to tell) produce,
By guiltless fingers squeez'd, a sovereign juice,
With which, thrice bath'd, the body will be found
One moon secur'd unhurt from flame or wound:
That month elaps'd the bathing we renew, 105
No longer time avails the powerful dew.
The proof of what I tell, thy wondering eyes
Shall witness soon—to thee a nobler prize
(Or much I err) than if this day had view'd
All Europe by thy conquering arm subdu'd. 110
In recompense for what I shall bestow
I ask but this—here plight thy solemn vow,
Ne'er from this hour by word or deed to harm
My virgin honour, or my fears alarm.

The damsel thus the Pagan's suit repress'd, 115
Who now with new desire of fame possess'd,

Vow'd

Vow'd all she ask'd, impatient to be made
 Alike impassive to the flame or blade :
 Resolv'd to curb his lust, till prov'd he view'd
 The wondrous water with such spell indu'd, 120
 Through which his limbs might scorn each weapon's
 power,
 As Cygnus or Achilles scorn'd before ;
 But meant his compact should no longer bind :
 No fear, no reverence, in his impious mind,

Of

Ver. 121. *As Cygnus or Achilles—*] Ovid tells us, *Metam.* Book XII. that Cygnus, the son of Neptune, could not be wounded. The common story of Achilles is, that he was dipped in the river Styx by his mother Thetis, and thereby became invulnerable in every part except the heel by which she held him, and that he was at last shot by Paris at the altar, in the only vulnerable place, at the instigation of Apollo, during the ceremony of his nuptials with Polyxena, the daughter of Priam. This fable is certainly of much later date than Homer, and not countenanced in the poems of Virgil, Horace, or Ovid. Homer represents him as being wounded in the battle of the river, by Asteropus, who was ambi-dexter, and threw two darts at Achilles at the same time.

At once Asteropus discharg'd each lance,
 (For both his dextrous hands the lance could wield)
 One struck, but pierc'd not the Vulcanian shield;
 One raz'd Achilles' hand, the spouting blood
 Spun forth——

POPE'S *Iliad*, B. XXI. v. 182.

Achilles

Of God or Saint—for breach of faith the worst 125

Of Afric's sons, by perjur'd deeds accurs'd!

O'er

Achilles was not slain in the temple, but fell in the field of battle, according to Homer, as appears by the conversation between that hero and Agamemnon in the shades.

O son of Peleus! greater than mankind!
 (Thus Agamemnon's kingly shade rejoin'd)
 Thrice happy thou, to press the martial plain,
 'Midst heaps of heroes in thy quarrel slain:
 In clouds of smoke, rais'd by the noble fray,
 Great and terrifick even in death you lay.

POPE'S *Odyf.* Book XXIV. ver. 51.

Hesiod has no account of the modern fable of Achilles, nor any of the ancient Greek tragedians. Sophocles thus mentions his death, in the tragedy of *Philoctetes*, Act ii. Scene i.

PHIL. Is then Achilles dead?

NEOP. ————— He is, and not
 By mortal hands, but by Apollo's shaft
 Fell glorious*.

Bion, who lived 187 years before Christ, in a fragment of an epithalamium on the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis, makes no mention of the immersion in the Styx; neither does Catullus in his poem on the same subject. Strabo, who died 65 years after Catullus, does not speak of this fable of the Styx, although he frequently alludes to the story of Achilles. Horace calls Achilles. "*filius Thetidos Marinae*," in three places. He speaks thus of his death—"abstulit clarum cita mors Achillem;" and mentions him frequently, but never as having been invulnerable.

* See Dr. FRANKLIN'S elegant translation of Sophocles.

Ovid

O'er hanging cliffs, through vallies dark with
 shade,
 From towns and cities far the virgin stray'd,

Collect-

Ovid gives no countenance to the story, though he particularly commemorates the death of Cygnus, slain by Achilles; and tells us, that the Grecian hero, to his great surprise, finding him invulnerable, was obliged to strangle him; that before his death he boasted to Achilles of his superior advantage derived from being the son of Neptune, alluding to this preternatural gift.

Nate dea (nam te fama prænovimus) inquit

Ille, quid a nobis vulnus miraris abesse?

(Mirabatur enim) non hæc, quam cernis equinis

Fulva jubis, cassis, neque onus cava parma sinistra

Auxilio mihi sunt: decor est quæsitus ab istis.

Mars quoque ab hoc capere arma solet: removebitur
 omne

Tegminis officium; tamen indistinctus abibo.

Est aliquid, non esse satum Nereïde, sed qui

Nereaque, et natus et totum temperet æquor.

METAM. Lib. xii. v. 86.

Goddefs born!

For ornament, not use, these arms are worn;

This helm and heavy buckler I can spare,

As only decorations of the war:

So Mars is arm'd for glory, not for need:

'Tis somewhat more from Neptune to proceed,

Than from a daughter of the sea to spring:

Your Sire is mortal, mine is Ocean's king.

Collecting various herbs, while at her side
 The Pagan watch'd, and every motion ey'd. 130
 Such

Secure of death, I could condemn thy dart

Though naked, and impassible depart.

DRYDEN.

The poet afterwards tells us, that Achilles was shot by an arrow from Paris, sent into the midst of the battle, but does not describe him as wounded in any particular part: speaking of Apollo standing by Paris, he says,

Dixit et ostendens sternentem Troia ferro

Corpora Peliden, arcus obvertit in illum:

Certaue letifera direxit spicula dextra.

MET. Lib. XII. ver. 604.

He said, and show'd from far the blazing shield

And sword, which but Achilles none could wield,

And how he look'd a God, and mow'd the standing
 field. }

The Deity himself directs aright

Th' envenom'd shaft, and wings the fatal flight.

DRYDEN.

Virgil records the circumstance of his being slain by Paris, in the prayer of Æneas to Apollo, which Dryden translates with hasty inaccuracy, his mind being impressed with the popular fable.

Indulgent God! propitious power to Troy!

Swift to relieve, unwilling to destroy;

Directed by whose hand, the Dardan dart

Pierc'd the proud Grecian's only mortal part.

For which the original gives no authority: the words of Virgil are,

Phœbe, graves Trojæ semper miserate labores,

Dardana qui Paridis direxti tela manusque

Corpus in Æacidæ——

ÆN. VI. 6.

Thus

Such store provided now as seem'd to suit
Her present purpose, or with leaf or root,

Damp

Thus faithfully rendered by Pitt.

Hear, Phœbus, gracious God! whose aid divine
So oft has fav'd the wretched Trojan line,
And wing'd the shaft from Paris' Phrygian bow,
The shaft that laid the great Achilles low.

The story of Achilles being slain in the temple at his nuptials with Polyxena, seems to have been of later invention than his dipping in the Styx: the author of both these fables is unknown; but the first may be traced back, if not to the inventor, at least as early as the Augustan age, when Hyginus, the freedman of Augustus and friend of Ovid, relates the death of Achilles thus, and seems to speak of the incident of the heel as a current, but probably a vulgar story; and therefore not noticed by the Classic writers of the time, who closely adhered to the authority of Homer.

“Hectore sepulto, cum Achilles circa mœnia Trojanorum vagaretur, ac diceret se solum Trojam expugnâsse, Apollo iratus, Alexandrum Parin se simulans, talum, quem mortalem habuisse dicitur, sagitta percussit et occidit.”

“After the funeral of Hector, when Achilles was boasting before the walls of Troy that he singly would take the city, Apollo being incensed, took upon him the likeness of Paris, and wounding Achilles in the heel, in which he was said to be mortal, slew him.”

The histories now extant under the names of Dictys Cretensis, and Dares the Phrygian, both said to have been present at the siege of Troy, have the story of Achilles with all the modern circumstances; but these histories are supposititious, the originals being lost.

Damp evening rose, when to their home they came,
Where she, the paragon of virtuous fame,

What

Statius, who died 91 years after Christ, in his *Achilleid* mentions the circumstance of the river Styx. Thetis speaking to Chiron, says,

—— Sæpe ipsa, nefas! sub inania natum
Tartara, et ad Stygios iterum fero mergere fontes,

LIB. I.

How oft this breast could hell's dire horrors brave,
To plunge my offspring in the Stygian wave!

She says to her son, when she has taken him to Scyros:

Mox iterum campos, iterum Centaurica reddam
Lustra tibi; per ego hoc decus, et ventura juventæ
Gaudia, si terras, humilemque experta maritum
Te propter, si progenitum Stygis amne severo
Armavi (totumque utinam) cape tuta parumper
Tegmina, nil nocitura animo.

LIB. II.

Soon shalt thou view (when eas'd my present fears)
Those shades, where Chiron watch'd thy playful years,
Again thy own—By all thy hop'd for praise!
By all the joys that wait thy youthful days!
If, for thy sake, a mortal's bed I chose,
And bear, for thee, a mother's anxious woes;
If Styx, by me, thy tender limbs could arm,
(Why felt not every part the potent charm!)
Here bear, a while secure, the female name,
Nor think these robes can taint thy future fame.

Seneca, Plutarch, and Pausanias are silent on this head. Quintus Calaber, who lived about two hundred years after Augustus, and wrote a supplement to Homer's *Iliad*, represents Achilles as wounded by Memnon, king of the *Æthiopians*. Lactantius, in his argument to the xiith book of the *Metamorphoses*, refers to the vulgar tradition

of

What yet remain'd of night, with seeming care 135
Employ'd the powerful mixture to prepare,

That

of the heel, which is the more singular, as no such circumstance occurs in his author: and Servius, in his note on the sixth book of the *Æneid*, to the before cited passage has the like reference. In the edition of Virgil by Mafuicius, the commentator on the same place, refers both to the story of the Styx and of Polyxena: and, speaking of the words here made use of by the poet, he adds: “ Et bene ait direxti—quasi ad solum vulnerabilem locum.” Dryden, in the preface to his translation of the *Æneid* refers to a passage of M. Segrain where the French writer is defending Virgil for giving his hero enchanted arms. “ This accusation (says Dryden) must fall on Homer ere it can reach Virgil. Achilles was as well provided with them as *Æneas*, though *he was invulnerable without them.*” He goes on thus: “ In defence of Virgil—he has been more cautious than his predecessor or descendants, for *Æneas* was actually wounded in the sixth book of the *Æneid.*” Thus far Dryden. But it is very extraordinary that so cool and judicious a critic as Segrain should take up this unclassical fable. Speaking of the enchanted arms given to the heroes of epic poetry or romance, he says, “ Ces présens des Dieux, sont même une preuve de la valeur du prince, à qui ils sont faits; et il ne se trouve point que les méchans et les hommes médiocres aient obtenu des grâces pareilles, la providence ne les accorde qu’aux hommes rares qui méritent seuls, qu’elle les conserve dans les dangers où leur courage les porte. Autrement il faudroit dire qu’Achille n’étoit pas vaillant, puis qu’outre un pareil secours d’armes forgés par

That bubbled o'er the blaze, while still the knight
With due attention mark'd each mystic rite.

Now with his squires in sportive dice and play
The king of Algiers pass'd the hours away, 140
When from the kindled fire, the heat enclos'd
In narrow bounds, to raging thirst dispos'd
The lord and menials, who insatiate drain'd
Two vases huge that Grecian wine contain'd,
Which from some travellers the day before 145
His squires had seiz'd, and to their master bore.

Vulcain sa mere avoit encore ajoutè des charmes qui le rendoient invulnerable."

To conclude this subject, in the discussion of which I hope I shall not have been thought tedious, though the first inventor of the story is unknown, it is undoubtedly of considerable antiquity, and has been occasionally made use of or rejected by different authors, but ought certainly never to be alluded to in any criticism or observation on Homer, to whom the fable appears to be wholly unknown. But it is no wonder that a fiction of this kind, so consonant to the genius of romance, should be adopted by Boyardo and Ariosto.

Ver. 125. —————the worst

Of Afric's sons, by perjur'd deeds accurst—]

The ill faith of the Carthaginians was known to a proverb in the time of the Romans, *Punica fides*. Thus Addison in the mouth of Juba:

Our Punic faith
Is infamous, and branded to a proverb.

CATO.
Stern

Stern Rodomont till then to wine unus'd,
Which to his sect the prophet's law refus'd,
Extoll'd the heavenly liquor far above
Celestial manna, or the drink of Jove ; 150
And blaming now his country's ancient rite,
Huge bowls and goblets empties with delight :
From hand to hand with foaming brimmers crown'd,
The wine swift circles, and the head turns round.

At length removing from the crackling flame 155
The vase with herbs infus'd, the virgin dame
To Rodomont began—What best may prove
The words I speak, and every doubt remove,
Experience, that can sever truth from lies,
Instruct the learn'd, and make the vulgar wise, 160
Not on another, but on me shall show
The wondrous power this unction can bestow.
Behold me now, while o'er my fearless head
My neck and breast the potent charm I shed,
Thy force, thy sword undaunted to receive ; 165
And prove if that can strike, or this can cleave.

She said ; and stooping as she spoke, display'd
Her neck uncover'd to the Pagan blade :
Th' unthinking Saracen, (whose wretched sense,
Wine had subdu'd, for which was no defence 170

From helm or shield) he, at the fatal word,
 Rais'd his fell arm, and bar'd his murdering sword,
 And, lo! that head, where love was wont to dwell,
 From her fair neck and breast divided fell: 174
 Thrice from the floor the head was seen to bound,
 And thrice was heard Zerbino's name to sound,

Ver. 176. *And thrice was heard, &c.*—] Corlambo, the giant's head in Spenser, speaks when cut off by Arthur.

FAIRY QUEEN, B. iv. C. viii.

His head before him humbled on the ground,
 The while his bubbling tongue did yet blaspheme.

“Poetry deals in the wonderful, and nothing is so tame and prosaic as Scaliger's criticism on the verse of Homer *IL. x.* which Spenser had in view, “*Falsum est a pulmone caput avulsum loqui posse.*” It is false that a head can speak after separation from the lungs. Hear OVID. *MET. v. ver. 104.*

*Demetit ense caput; quod protinus incidit aræ,
 Atque ibi semianimi verba execrantia linguæ
 Edidit—*

The trenchant falchion lopt his head away,
 The gory visage on the altar lay,
 While on the lips imperfect accents hung,
 And curses linger'd on the dying tongue.

“And speaking of a lady's tongue, (which may be less wonderful) when cut off and flung upon the ground, he says, “*terræque tremens immurmurat.*”

—And trembling murmurs on the ground.

So Homer, who is all wonderful, and the father of all poetical wonders, speaks of Dolon, whose head was cut off by Diomed. Mr. Pope's translation is admirable.

“The head, yet speaking, mutter'd as it fell.”

IL. X. 10.

See UFTON'S NOTES ON SPENSER.

For

For whose dear sake she found such way t' escape
 The Pagan's hand, nor fear'd, in such a shape,
 T' encounter death to follow him she lov'd—
 Hail, spotless soul! for purest faith approv'd, 180
 Whose act has shown how dear thy plighted spouse
 By thee was held, how dear thy virgin vows:
 Fair Chastity, on earth now little heard,
 By thee to life and blooming years preferr'd.
 Go, blessed soul! depart in peace to Heaven! 185
 So to my feeble Muse such aid be given,
 As may with every grace the song adorn,
 And give thy name to ages yet unborn!
 Go hence in peace to Heaven, and leave behind
 Thy bright example still to womankind! 190
 At this stupendous deed, from purest skies
 On earth the great Creator bent his eyes,

Ver. 180. *Hail, spotless soul!*] On this passage Mr. Upton observes, that Ariosto, in admiration of the chastity and martyrdom of Isabella, breaks out into a most elegant apostrophe, which Spenser copies in his address to Florimel, when she is in prison tempted by Proteus.

Eternal thraldom was to her more lief
 Than loss of chastity, or 'change of love——
 Most virtuous virgin, glory be thy meed,
 And crown of heavenly praise with saints above—
 But yet, what so my feeble muse can frame
 Shall be t' advance——

FAIRY QUEEN, B. iii. C. viii. St. 42.

And

And said—Thy virtue merits more renown,
 Than hers whose death robb'd Tarquin of his crown :
 Henceforth I mean for ever for thy sake, 195
 Amidst my Saints a great decree to make,
 Which by th' inviolable stream I swear,
 To every future age thy praise shall bear :
 Let every maid that holds thy name be blest
 With genius, beauty, virtue, o'er the rest 200

Ver. 197. *Which by th' inviolable stream I swear—*] Ruscelli, the Italian commentator, takes great pains to clear Ariosto from censure, for having introduced the Supreme Being, on this occasion, taking an oath like Jupiter in the Iliad or Æneid; tho' I fear that such passage can be defended by no argument adduced in its justification, but that it must in general be acknowledged, that Ariosto, like the rest of his countrymen, often introduces the fictions of poetry on the most solemn occasions. But a heavier charge may be here brought against the poet for making the Almighty approve the action of Lucretia, and thereby giving a sanction to suicide. This passage the Italian commentator has candidly confessed to be a gross breach of propriety and decorum.

Ver. 199. *Let every maid that holds thy name, &c.*] By this extravagant prophesy on all who bear the name of Isabella, the poet is said to make an eulogium on the duchess of Mantua, the daughter of Hercules duke of Ferrara, and wife of Ferrando king of Naples; the wife of Ferdinando king of Spain, to whose wisdom is attributed chiefly the discovery of the new world by Columbus; the wife of Frederick, king of Naples; the wife of Ubaldo, duke of Urbino; but more especially a daughter of the king of Hungary, who was canonized by pope Gregory IX. for the sanctity of her life; all these ladies bore the name of Isabella.

PORCACCHI.

Of

Of woman's sex, but most the prize obtain
 For chastity and faith without a stain;
 While Pindus, Helicon, Parnassus' hill
 Sound Isabella, Isabella still.

204

Th' Almighty spoke, the air was hush'd around,
 Smooth spread the waves o'er ocean's vast profound,
 To the third Heaven the virgin-soul withdrew,
 And in the arms of her Zerbino flew,
 While, left behind, this second Brufus stood, 209
 Abash'd, confounded, stain'd with guiltless blood;
 Who now, the wine's o'er-mastering fumes dispell'd,
 Curs'd his dire rashness, and with grief beheld
 The breathless body of the murder'd maid,
 And ponder'd how t' appease her angry shade:
 Since to her mortal part he death could give, 215
 He hopes to make her name immortal live.

Ver. 207. *To the third Heaven—*] Ariosto here follows the fiction of some of the ancient poets who taught that those lovers, who had been constant, were after death received into the third Heaven, the region of Venus the goddess of love. PORCACCHI.

Ver. 209. *Brufus—*] Brufus, surnamed without mercy, a character in the romances of the Round-Table. He is largely spoken of by Alamanni, in his poetical romance of GIRONE IL CORTESE; and is mentioned by Pulci in his Morgante, Canto xiii. who calls him Brufus without pity.

For

For this intent, the place where late she dwelt,
 Where her fair form his brutal fury felt,
 He chang'd or built anew, with spacious room
 Enlarg'd, converting to a stately tomb. 220
 From various parts around him, far and near,
 Artists he found for favour or for fear:
 Six thousand men, with ceaseless labour, wrought
 Huge massy stones, from neighbouring quarries
 brought;
 With those he bade the stately building rise 225
 Of wondrous bulk, that lifted to the skies
 Its towering head, and in the midst enclos'd
 The faithful lovers* that in death repos'd.
 Such was the structure which the world amaz'd,
 By Adrian on the banks of Tyber rais'd. 230
 Close to the sepulchre a tower was join'd,
 The spacious dwelling for himself design'd.

* ZERBINO and ISABELLA.

Ver. 230. *By Adrian on the banks of Tyber rais'd—*] The poet means the noble castle of St. Angelo at Rome, built by Pope Adrian VI. on the river Tyber. This building was afterwards enlarged by several successive Popes, till Pius V. put the finishing hand to it.

A nar-

A narrow bridge, scarce two feet wide, he made,
Fair stretch'd in length, which o'er the stream he
laid

That ran beneath, and scarce the bridge supply'd 235
Space for two steeds abreast to cross the tide,
Or, meeting, pass: nor plac'd from end to end
Was rail or fence the stranger to defend.
Baptiz'd or Pagan, all that travel here, 239
He will'd henceforth should buy their passage dear,

Ver. 233. *A narrow bridge—*] This fiction of Rodomont's bridge is truly in the spirit of romance. We often read of knights meeting with such adventures: in the old romance of *Morte Arthur*, Sir Launcelot encounters a churl who defended a passage over a river.

“On the third day he rode over a great long bridge, and there started upon him suddenly a passing foul churl, and he smote his horse on the nose, that he turned about, and asked him why he rode over that bridge without his license? and he struck at him with a mighty great club full of pins of iron. Then Sir Launcelot drew his sword, and put the stroke back, and clove his head unto the navel.”

MORTE ARTHUR, Part i. C. cxi.

Spenser has a passage similar to this of Ariosto, where a bridge of this kind is described, and a combat ensues between Sir Arthegal and a Saracen.

Here beyond,
A curst cruel Saracen doth wonne,
That keeps a bridge's passage by strong hand,
And many Errant Knights hath there foredonne.

FAIRY QUEEN, B. v. C. ii. St. 4.

For

For with their spoils, t' atone the virgin's doom,
He vow'd a thousand trophies at her tomb.
Ten days beheld the bridge complete; but more
Requir'd to raise the sepulchre and tower:
Yet well the work advanc'd, and on the height 245
A watch was plac'd to note each coming knight;
And oft as near the bridge a warrior drew,
The horn to Rodomont a signal blew.
Sudden he arm'd him for the course, and stood
Now here, now there, on either side the flood. 250
Whene'er a warrior reach'd the fatal tower,
The king of Algiers took the adverse shore:
The slender bridge the dangerous list supply'd,
There if the steed but little swerv'd aside,
Prone in the river's headlong depth he fell: 255
No fight, for peril, could such fight excel.
Thus often risk'd, the Saracen believ'd
Whene'er he fell, the rushing stream receiv'd
In draughts compell'd, would purify his soul
For sins committed through th' inflaming bowl;
As if from water certain cure was brought 261
For wrongs, which wine by hand or tongue had
wrought.

Few

Few days elaps'd, ere numerous knight were led,
For Spain and Italy that path to tread.

The thirst of fame, to some more dear than life, 265
Brought many knights to prove the dangerous strife,
While all who hop'd the victor's meed to gain,
Resign'd their arms, and numbers there were slain.
Of vanquish'd Pagans that the course had run,
He kept their spoils alone, and armour won. 270

Of these the names on tablets fairly trac'd,
And hung on high the polish'd marble grac'd:
But every Christian close in durance pent
He held, design'd for Afric to be sent.

The work proceeding, on a certain day, 275
The mad Orlando thither bent his way.
The frantic earl by fortune thither came,
When Rodomont, beside the rapid stream,
Urg'd on the task: as yet unfinish'd stood
The tower and tomb, and scarcely o'er the flood 280
The bridge complete, when thither came the knight
Of wits distraught, what time in corselet bright
The Pagan watch'd to guard the tomb and tower,
And all his armour, save his helmet, wore.

Meanwhile Orlando, as his frenzy led, 285
At once o'erleapt the bar with fearless tread:

Him Rodomont, who stood on foot, espy'd
 And thus from far—Forbear thy steps (he cry'd).
 This bridge, thou slave! was ne'er design'd for thee,
 But noble knights and lords of high degree. 295
 Orlando, stranger now to reason's force,
 Turn'd a deaf ear, and onward held his course.
 I must chastise this fool (the Pagan cries)
 And as he speaks, with rapid feet he flies
 To plunge him in the stream, nor thinks to try 300
 A fall with one that could his strength defy.

And now it chanc'd a fair and gentle dame,
 T' attempt the passage near the river came;
 Her lovely form in courtly weeds array'd,
 And all her mien a noble race display'd. 305
 Lo! this was she (if still your mind retain
 The tale I told) who long had fought in vain
 The steps of Brandimart, and far explor'd
 Each part but that which now detain'd her lord.

Ver. 386

— *if still your mind retain*

The tale I told—] Flordelis is here again introduced, who last made her appearance in the xxivth book, ver. 535. and was present at the single combat between Mandricardo and Zerbino; after which she continued her search of Brandimart till she came to this bridge.

Fair

Fair Flordelis, arriving near the flood, 310
Beheld where on the bridge the Pagan stood,
Clos'd with Orlando, while each nerve he ply'd
To hurl the madman headlong in the tide.
The virtuous dame, when, with a nearer view,
She mark'd his features, well Orlando knew; 315
And fill'd with grief, at such dire sight amaz'd,
On him thus naked and forlorn she gaz'd.

Awhile she staid t' await the conflict's end,
Where two such foes in matchless strength contend.
They press, they gripe, their utmost nerve they show,
Each strives the other from the bridge to throw, 316
And, muttering to himself, the Pagan cries,
What to this fool such unlook'd force supplies?
Now here, now there he struggles, shifts, and turns,
With shame he reddens, and with wrath he burns:
With either hand he seeks, in vain, to take 321
Some firmer hold, that best the earl may shake;
And oft between his legs the furious knight
The left foot now inserts, and now the right.
Orlando Rodomont entwines around, 325
Like the fierce bear that struggles from the ground
T' uproot the tree from which he fell, and deals
His senseless rage on that which nothing feels.

Hapless Orlando, with his wits destroy'd, 330
Nor flight, nor art, but strength alone employ'd;
(Such wondrous strength the world from end to end
No living chief to equal him could send!)
Himself now backward from the bridge he threw,
And with him, close embrac'd, the Pagan drew. 335
Both sink together to the depth profound,
Leap the dash'd waves, and loud the shores re-
found!

The water soon divides their struggling limbs;
Orlando, naked, disincumber'd swims:
Amid the stream he plies, as with an oar, 340
His strong knit joints, and safely gains the shore:
Then o'er the plain he speeds his course, nor stays
To mark how far he merits blame or praise.
The Pagan, whom his ponderous arms surround,
More slowly gains, at length, the distant ground. 345
Meanwhile securely o'er the bridge and tide
The dame had past, and round on every side
Explor'd the tomb, if there her anxious eye
Might any spoils of Brandimart espy.
Yet while nor arms, nor mantle there she
view'd 350

Of him she lov'd—fond hopes she still renew'd

To

To meet her lord—but let us turn to find
 The wretched earl, who fled with senseless mind,
 And left the bridge, the stream, and tower be-
 hind. 354

Wild were the thought t' attempt in tuneful verse,
 The madness of Orlando to rehearse:
 Such various feats—their number would excel,
 What leisure could describe, or tongue could tell:
 A few I chuse that best besit my song;
 A few that to my story best belong: 360
 Nor will I fail the wonder to recite
 Wrought near Tolosa on Pyrene's height.

O'er many a tract of land the earl had past,
 And reach'd the range of craggy hills at last, 364
 That sever France from Spain, whose lofty head
 Receives the beams by evening Phœbus shed.
 Here, while he pac'd along a narrow way,
 That o'er a deep tremendous valley lay,

Ver. 352. ———— *but let us turn to find*

The wretched earl—] He returns to Flordelis, book
 xxxi. ver. 429.

Ver. 354. ———— *and tower behind.*] He returns to
 Rodomont, book xxxi. ver. 461.

Ver. 355. *Wild were the thought—*] Concerning the extrava-
 gant feats of Orlando in his madness, the reader is referred to the
 note on book xxiv. ver. 34.

Two village lads he met, who drove before
A laden ass that wintry fuel bore. 370

These, when they view'd the hapless champion lost
To every sense, as in their path he crost,

A loud they call'd, and, threatening, bade him leave
The middle track, and free the passage give.

Orlando to their threats no word return'd, 375

But with his foot, beneath the belly, spurn'd
The wretched beast, with strength beyond compare,

And rais'd from earth dismiss'd to soar in air ;

Thence on the summit of a hill he fell,

That rear'd its head a mile beyond the dell. 380

The youths he next assail'd: one less discreet

Than happy, chanc'd a strange escape to meet :

For, struck with terror, from the hanging steep

Twice thirty feet he took a ventrous leap :

A thorny bush against the cliff's rough side 385

That in the mid-way grew, its aid supply'd

To break his fall ; and now, unhurt, he stood,

Save that his face the bramble's greeting show'd, }

That raz'd the skin, and drew the purple blood. }

His fellow seiz'd a jutting crag, and sprung 390

To scale the rock, but while aloft he clung,

The

The madman, on his swift destruction bent,
Grasp'd either leg, these at his arms extent
He strain'd afunder, till, with dreadful force,
He tore in bloody halves the panting corse. 395

Thus, for his bird, the falconer oft prepares
The living meal, when limb from limb he tears
The fowl or heron, destin'd for his food,
With entrails warm and flesh distilling blood.

Thrice happy he that in the vale beneath 400
Surviv'd a fall, that threaten'd instant death.
This wondrous chance he made to others known,
Which Turpin to our age delivers down.

Such deeds, and many far transcending thought,
The madman, as he pass'd the mountain, wrought,
Till wandering far, descending to the plain, 406
He reach'd at length the southern bounds of Spain,
And bent his course along the sea, that laves
Fair Teracona's strand with briny waves.

There, with strange schemes his brain distemper'd
fill'd, 410

He meant a dwelling on the beach to build,
A shelter from the sun; and, cover'd o'er
With parching sand, upon the burning shore

Con-

Conceal'd he lay, when lo! the princely dame
 Of rich Cathay with her Medoro came. 415
 These late espous'd, by fortune thither brought,
 From the steep height the Spanish borders fought.
 Th' unthinking damsel near Orlando drew,
 Who, save his head, lay buried deep from view.
 The squalid look her frantic lover wore, 420
 No memory wak'd of him she knew before:
 For since the time his frenzy had begun,
 He wander'd, naked, in the shade or sun:
 His tawny members seem'd to speak his birth
 In hot Sienna, or the sultry earth, 425
 Where Amon's fane in Garamantia stood,
 Or those steep hills whence Nile derives his flood:
 Deep in the socket sunk each gloomy eye,
 His visage pale, his features lean and dry:

Ver. 425. *In hot Sienna, or the sultry earth*
Where Amon's fane——] Sienna, a city of Egypt,
 subject to the most intense heat of the sun. The temple of Amon
 was situated in Africa, and held in veneration by the Garamantians,
 a people inhabiting those parts.

Ver. 427. *Or those steep hills——]* Mountains of Ethiopia, called
 the Mountains of the Moon.

His

His uncomb'd hair in fearful elflocks hung ; 430

His squalid beard was matted, thick, and long.

Soon as Angelica, with startled look,

The madman view'd, through every joint she shook :

She shook with fear, while loud to heaven she cry'd,

And call'd for succour to her trusty guide : 435

When mad Orlando view'd that lovely face,

As if, by instinct, starting from his place,

He gaz'd, and with an idiot joy beheld,

Those heavenly charms that every charm excell'd :

Though all reflection that she once possess'd 440

His soul's dear love was banish'd from his breast.

He sees, he likes—and what he likes pursues :

So the staunch hound, amid the tainted dews,

Winds his fleet prey : the youth who view'd his dame

Thus closely prest, behind the madman came 445

With trampling courser, and to rage inflam'd,

Against his back the glittering weapon aim'd.

Sheer through his neck he thought to drive the
sword,

But found the wondrous flesh no pass afford.

Orlando felt the sword, and turning round, 450

With hand, unarm'd, laid lifeless on the ground

Medoro's

Medoro's steed—then hasten'd to pursue
The trembling damsel that before him flew,
That spurr'd her mare, whose pace had seem'd too
flow,

Though like an arrow from the well-strung bow. 455

But now she call'd her last resource to mind,
Her wondrous ring, which still she us'd to find
Her sure defence, which held between her lips,
Conceal'd her person with a strange eclipse :
The charm she try'd, and vanish'd from the sight,
As with the whistling blast th' extinguish'd light. 461

Then, whether fear, or whether eager haste,
Th' affrighted damsel in her seat displac'd ;
Or whether then her mare, ill-fated, fell

By sudden trip—'tis doubtful here to tell. 465

But while the ring she from her finger drew,
And, in her mouth dispos'd, conceal'd from view
Her lovely form, the stirrups from her feet
She lost, and tumbled headlong from her seat :

And had she nearer fall'n, the madman's arm 470
Had surely seiz'd and wrought her further harm ;
Her life perhaps had then the forfeit paid
For all her scorn—but Fortune gave her aid.

Now

Now must the damsel, of her mare bereft,
 Some other palfrey seek by fraud or theft: 475
 For this the Paladin with eager speed
 Pursues; and doubt not here another steed
 Will soon be her's—but let us now repair
 To him who, losing thus the vanish'd fair,
 Her beast pursu'd along the sandy plain: 480
 At length he seiz'd her by the flowing mane:
 With ease the Paladin her swiftness stay'd,
 As one with gentle hand the gentler maid.
 The bridle now he took, and with a bound,
 The frantic hero, rising from the ground, 485
 Vaults in the seat, then drives her many a mile,
 Nor gives a moment's respite to her toil;
 Nor frees her from the saddle, bit, or rein,
 Nor lets her taste of grass, or hay, or grain.
 It chanc'd as o'er a fosse he urg'd her pace, 490
 Both beast and man fell headlong in the place.
 No hurt Orlando knew: but with the shock
 The wretched beast, misus'd, her shoulder broke.

Ver. 477. ————another steed

Will soon be her's—] Angelica is mentioned again
 for the last time, Book xxx. ver. 114.

F

And

And here compell'd awhile Orlando stays,
At length athwart his back the mare he lays, 495
And bears as far, as sent with vigorous art,
Thrice from the bow-string flies the feather'd dart;
Till by the weight oppress'd, with rein in hand,
He leads her limping o'er the shelly strand:
The crippled mare pursues his steps with pain—
Come on—come on—Orlando cries in vain. 501
At length the bridle, with a noose supply'd,
He took, and round her better leg he ty'd,
Then dragg'd along, and as he dragg'd, he said:
Well may'st thou follow now, so gently led. 505
Against the flinty road the covering hair
Was rent and torn, and all the flesh laid bare,
Till death ensu'd; nor yet Orlando ceas'd,
But onward drew the mangled lifeless beast.
Still towards the west he pass'd, and in his course 510
Dwellings and towns he wasted, took by force
From trembling peasants all the food he fought,
Or fruit or flesh: of wretches whom he caught
Unhappy some he maim'd, and some he slew,
And on his way with rage ungovern'd flew. 515
Thus had it far'd with her whom once he lov'd,
But from her ring a better fate she prov'd.

Curst

Curst be the ring! and evil chance betide
The knight that with the gift her hand supply'd!
Else had Orlando full revenge obtain'd 520
For him, and each whom once her pride disdain'd.
Not she alone, but would that all her kind
Were to Orlando's frantic arm consign'd.
All are ingrate! nor midst the perjur'd race,
Is one whose merits claim the smallest grace:— 525
But hold, or strain'd too far, my weary lyre
May ill supply the sound my lays require.
Here let us for awhile the tale suspend,
Till the pleas'd ear again attention lend.

END OF THE TWENTY-NINTH BOOK.



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